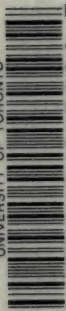


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THE WORKS  
OF  
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I.

THE WORKS  
OF  
HEINRICH HEINE

*TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN*

BY

CHARLES GODFREY LELAND  
(HANS BREITMANN)

VOLUME I.

LONDON  
WILLIAM HEINEMANN

1906

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# FLORENTINE NIGHTS

THE MEMOIRS OF HERR VON SCHNABELEWOPSKI

THE RABBI OF BACHARACH

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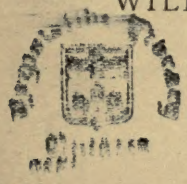
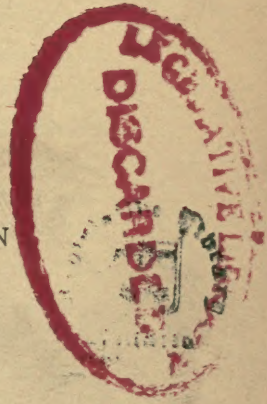
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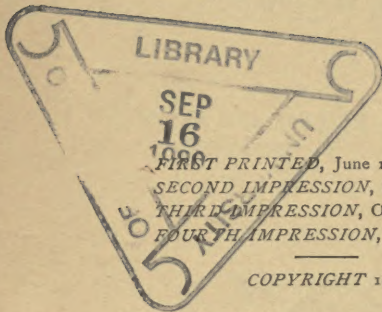
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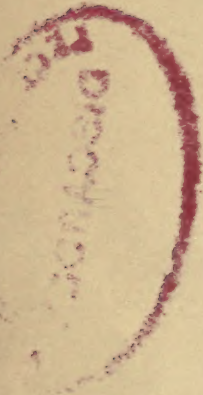






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## INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

It is much to say of a voluminous writer in prose as well as verse, that, though he may have left many a line which, for one reason or another, he might personally have wished to blot, he has left few that can be spared from the literature of the world. This may justly be said of Heine, but of how many others? Let us apply the same severe test to greater names than even Heine's. Take the man whose mission on the whole most nearly resembled his—Voltaire. Voltaire was in some sense the mouthpiece of his generation; he has through it produced the deepest effect on all generations to come; he has left immortal things behind him; but the project of a complete translation of Voltaire would kindle the enthusiasm of no publisher and no public. Take the greatest of German writers, Goethe, in whom we most cheerfully acknowledge a greater than Heine, but

who is totally unable to stand the test indicated in his poetical works even, to say nothing of his prose. There are other poets of Heine's calibre of whose writings we would not lose a word; but Byron, Burns, and Shelley did not subject themselves to the test which Heine successfully underwent of writing undying things in prose:—philosophy, and criticism, and even politics.

If we must account for this singular distinction, we should say that Heine, more than any of the great men we have named, except Shelley, was a poet by the grace of God, and that he carried the happy instinct of his verse into his prose. As a poet he was essentially a *Volksdichter*—the same sort of person, that is to say, as the unknown musicians whose Border Minstrelsies and Spanish *Cancioneros* are the envy and admiration of an artificial age. Every such writer, besides the moral endowment of feeling and the sensuous endowment of melody, is necessarily equipped with two intellectual gifts, perfect lucidity and perfect proportion. Imagine such a man to be at the same time a most original and accurate thinker, and to possess in the discussion of grave matters the ease and brightness and symmetry which have constituted his charm as a lyric poet, and it



will be seen that his prose may be as well worth translating as his verse. To illustrate the meaning by an example on the contrary side, Wordsworth's prose style, though noble and dignified, is not the style of the immortal part of his poetry. If he had been able to discuss the principles of poetical composition and the Convention of Cintra in the style of "Lucy Gray," he would have been not merely a fine essayist, but an unique figure in literature. No one, manifestly, could achieve this without a special, an almost miraculous gift. Heine actually possessed this gift; and hence his prose disquisitions, descriptions, satires, and the rest, are as original in form as in substance. The same charm pervades all he wrote, and hence, whatever judgment may be passed on the moral characteristics of his work, from a literary point of view there is absolutely nothing in it which a translator is not justified in rendering—if he can. If the foreign reader fails to enjoy, the fault is not in Heine, but in his own want of preliminary acquaintance with Heine's theme. Writing for a German public on themes of contemporary concern, Heine inevitably presupposes an amount of existing knowledge which the English reader will not always possess. It must be added, however

—and this is one very good reason for translating him—that Heine affords a very potent stimulus towards the acquisition of knowledge. The reader of his “*Romantic School*,” for instance, who may not have previously heard of Tieck and Novalis, must be a dull sort of person if he does not henceforth feel a curiosity respecting them.

A still more important aspect of Heine is his relation to the creeds and circumstances of his century, and his influence in shaping European thought. The reader who would wish to determine how far Heine will repay his attention in this respect is advised to consult the masterly criticism upon him in Matthew Arnold’s essays. Mr. Arnold regards Heine as a great liberator, not a man of consummate achievement as a thinker, or one by any means to be implicitly followed or unreservedly extolled, but invaluable as a dissolvent, breaking up and abolishing opinions and habits which have become mere petrified formulas, and thus preparing the way for new things which he did not create and did not always rightly conceive. He liked to be called the German Aristophanes, but he was even more of a Socrates, whose mission, apart from his poetical gift, it was to make men consider whether they really meant

what they said. It should be added that, perhaps in virtue of his supreme poetical endowment, his insight into the future was often startling; and that, if he has not solved the riddles of his time, no one has stated them so well. A complete translation of his works, then, seems as much the due of his intellectual significance as of his matchless literary genius.

R. G.





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## FLORENTINE NIGHTS.

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### FIRST NIGHT.

19 IN the ante-room Maximilian found the physician, who was drawing on his black gloves. "I am in a great hurry," said the latter hastily; "Signora Maria has not slept all day, and only just now has fallen into a little nap. I need not tell you that she must not be disturbed by any noise, and when she wakens she must not speak for her life! She must lie still, not move in the least—the only movement permitted her is that of a mental nature. I beg you—tell her all or any kind of fanciful stories, so that she will only listen quietly."

"Rest assured, doctor," replied Maximilian, with a mournful smile. "I have trained myself for a talker, and will not let her speak. And I will tell her fantastic stuff enough—as much as you will. But how long will she live?"

"I am in a great hurry," replied the physician, and disappeared.

Black Deborah with her acute ear had quickly

recognised the step of the new comer, and softly opened for him the door. At his nod she as quietly left the chamber, and Maximilian found himself alone by his lady friend. The chamber was dimly lit by a single lamp, which cast half fearful, half inquisitive gleams on the face of the beautiful woman who, clad entirely in white muslin, lay sleeping calmly on a green-silk sofa.

Silent, with folded arms, Maximilian stood a while before the sleeper and regarded the beautiful limbs, which the light garb rather revealed than hid, and every time when a strip of light fell on the pale face his heart throbbed: "In God's name!" he murmured, "*what* is that? What memory is it that wakes in me? Ah, I know now—this white form on the green ground—yes—now"——

At that instant the invalid awoke, and as if gazing from the depth of a dream, the soft dark violet eyes looked questioning—praying, on the friend. "Of what were you thinking just now, Maximilian?" she said, with that terrible, soft voice, such as is heard from those who suffer from lung complaint, and in which we seem to hear the prattle of a child, the chirping of a bird, and the death-rattle. "Of what were you thinking?" she repeated, and raised her head so hastily that the long locks curled about it like gold serpents frightened up.

“For God’s sake,” cried Maximilian, as he softly pressed her down again on the sofa, “remain quiet, say nothing; I will tell you all that I think or feel—yes, even what I don’t know.

“In fact,” he continued, “I do not know exactly what I just now thought and felt. Pictures from childhood swept like twilight dreams through my soul. I thought of my mother’s chateau<sup>1</sup>—of its garden run wild, of the beautiful marble statue which lay in the green grass. I called it my mother’s chateau, but I beg you, of my life, do not understand by that anything magnificent or grand. I have always been accustomed to hear it so called. My father laid a curious emphasis on ‘the castle,’ and smiled oddly as he said it. It was not till a later time that I learned the meaning of this smile—when I, a boy of twelve, went with my mother to the chateau. It was my first journey. We drove all day through a thick forest, whose dark thrills I shall never forget, and it was not till twilight that we first paused at a long cross-bar which separated us from a great meadow. We were obliged to wait almost half-an-hour before a ‘boy’ came from a mud hut hard by, who pushed away the impediment and let us in. I say ‘boy,’ because old Martha always

<sup>1</sup> *Schloss*—castle, chateau, a country villa of a superior kind. Generally a castle, but not invariably.

called her forty-year-old nephew by this term. This youth, in order to receive 'the gracious quality,'<sup>1</sup> had donned the old livery of his late uncle, and we had been obliged to wait until he had brushed it clean. Could he have had more time he would have also put on his stockings; but, as it was, his long bare legs were in good keeping with his scarlet coat. Whether he wore breeches under it I do not know. Our servant John, who, like me, had often heard of 'the chateau,' made a very strange face when the 'boy' led us to the little broken building where the late Herr had dwelt. But he was startled indeed when my mother bade him bring in the beds. How could he suppose there were no beds at 'the chateau'? And the order of my mother to provide sleeping comforts he had either never heard or neglected it as superfluous trouble.

"The little dwelling, just one storey high, which had not boasted in its best days more than five inhabitable rooms, was now a pitiful picture of the passed away. Wrecked furniture, ragged hangings and carpets, not one window-pane unbroken, the floor torn up here and there, and everywhere ugly traces of the most outrageous acts of the soldiery.

<sup>1</sup> *Die gnädige Herrschaft*. "Quality" is still used by negroes in America, as it was in the time of Queen Anne, to signify aristocracy.

“‘Those who were quartered on us amused themselves very much at our expense,’ said the ‘boy,’ with a stupid smile. My mother made a sign to him that we would gladly be alone, and while he busied himself with John, I went to see the garden, which also wore the most inconsolable air of ruin. The great trees were partly hacked away, partly felled, and spiteful, sneering parasites rose over the fallen trunks. Here and there one could recognise the way amid the box-bushes growing wildly out of trim. Here and there too stood statues, the most of which had lost their heads or at least their noses. I remember a Diana whose nether limbs were overgrown with dark ivy in a comical fashion, and also of a goddess of plenty from whose cornucopia flowed rank, poisonous weeds. One statue only had been spared—God knows how—from the mischief of man and Time. It had indeed been hurled from its pedestal into the high grass, but it lay there uninjured—a marble goddess, with the most exquisitely pure features, and with a finely chiselled noble breast which gleamed up from the high grass like a Greek Apocalypse. I was almost terrified at the sight; this statue inspired in me a strange, close, feverish terror, and a secret bashfulness kept me from gazing long at its lovely mien.

“When I returned to my mother she stood by

the window, lost in thought, her head resting on her right hand, while tears ran without ceasing down her cheeks. I had never seen her weep like this. She embraced me hastily and tenderly, and made excuse that owing to John's neglect I could not have a proper bed. 'Old Martha,' she said, 'is very ill, and cannot give up her bed for you, my dear child. But John can arrange the cushions from the coach so that you can sleep on them, and you may take his cloak for covering. I will sleep here on straw; this was the bedroom of my late<sup>1</sup> father—it looked far better once than it now does. Leave me alone.' And the tears ran more irrepressibly from her eyes.

"Whether it was the not being used to such a bed, or to my excited feelings, I could not sleep. The moon shone so directly at me through the broken panes, that it seemed as if it would lure me out into the clear summer night. Whether I turned to the right side or the left, whether I opened or impatiently shut my eyes, I could think of nothing but the beautiful marble statue which I had seen in the grass. I could not understand the bashfulness which seized me when I first saw it; I felt vexed

<sup>2</sup> *Selig*, blessed, is used for late or deceased. Hence, as Longfellow observed, a German widow always speaks of her departed husband as "her blessed man."



at this childish feeling, and said to myself, 'To-morrow I will kiss thee, thou beautiful marble face; kiss thee on the lovely corner of the mouth where the lips melt into such a charming dimple!' And then an impatience such as I had never before felt rippled through all my limbs, I could not resist the strange impulse, and at last I jumped up boldly and said: 'What does it matter if I kiss thee even now, beautiful form!'

"I stole softly from the house, lest my mother should hear, which was all the easier because the entrance, though it bore a great coat-of-arms, had no door, and hastily wound my way through the shrubbery of the wasted garden. There was not a sound—all rested silently and solemnly in the calm moonshine. The shadows of the trees seemed to be nailed to the ground. There in the green grass lay the beautiful goddess, as immovable as all around; but her lovely limbs seemed to be fettered, not by petrifying death, but by quiet slumber, and as I drew near I almost feared lest she might be wakened by the lightest sound. I held my breath as I bent over to behold her beautiful face; a shuddering, troubled fear seemed to repel me from, and a youthful lustyhood to attract me to her; my heart beat as if I were about to commit a murder, and at last I kissed the beautiful goddess with a passion, a tenderness, and a desperation such as I

never felt in my life from any kiss. Nor can I ever forget the grimly sweet emotion which ran through all my soul as the comforting, blessing coldness of those marble lips touched mine. . . . And so, Maria, as I just now stood before you, and I saw you lying in your white muslin dress on the green sofa, your appearance reminded me of the white marble image in the green grass. Had you slept longer my lips could not have resisted"——

"Max! Max!" cried the woman from the depths of her soul. "Terrible! You know that a kiss from your mouth"——

"Ah—only be silent; I know that would be something terrible to you! Do not look at me so imploringly! I do not doubt your feelings, although their deepest ground lies hidden from me. I have never dared to press my lips to yours"——

But Maria did not allow him to conclude. She had grasped his hand, covered it with earnest kisses, and said, smiling: "Pardon! pardon! But go on and tell me more of your amour. How long did you love the marble beauty whom you kissed in the garden of your mother's chateau?"

"We left the next day," replied Maximilian, "and I never saw its beautiful form again. But a strange passion for marble statues ever afterwards inspired me, and I felt even to-day

its irresistible power. I came from the Lorenzo, the library of the Medici, and found myself, I know not how, in the chapel where that most magnificent of the races of Italy has built itself a sleeping-place of gems, and rests in peace. A full hour I remained absorbed in gazing at the marble image of a woman whose powerful frame attests the bold skill of Michael Angelo, while the whole form is inspired with an ethereal sweetness such as we are not accustomed to expect in that master. All the realm of dreams, with all its silent blisses, is enchanted into this marble; a tender repose dwells in the beautiful limbs, a soothing moonlight courses through its veins: it is the *Night* of Michael Angelo Buonarrotti. Oh! how gladly would I sleep in the arms of this Night!<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A strange book might be written on this subject of men who have literally loved statues, and Bonifacius has in his *Historia Ludicra*, or *Strange Stories*, collected a number of instances from antiquity of men thus inspired. There is a story current in Florence of an Englishman who was enamoured of the Venus di Medicis. Most remarkable of all the literature on this subject, which Heine seems to have studied thoroughly, is a chapter on *Gli Amori Sacrilegi*, in a book entitled *Delle Bizzarrie Accademiche di Gio*, Francesco Loredano, Venice, 1667. This monograph, which certainly inspired Heine in these passages, is supposed to be a speech by Amicles of Athens, defending, or rather vindicating, himself from the accusation of having made love to a statue of Venus. It is a masterpiece of æsthetic cynicism. There are indications in other works by Heine that he had read this book. A *reductio ad absurdum* of this freak of

“The painted forms of women,” continued Maximilian, after a pause, “have never interested me so deeply as statues. I was only once in love with a picture. It was a wonderfully beautiful Madonna in a church in Cologne. I was at that time a zealous church-goer, and all my soul was sunk in the mysticism of Catholicism. I would then, like the Spanish cavalier, have gladly fought every day for the Immaculate Conception of Mary, the Queen of the Angels, the fairest lady of heaven and of earth. I interested myself in the whole Holy Family, and took off my hat with special friendliness before any image of Saint Joseph. But this state did not last long, and I left the Virgin almost without ceremony as soon as I became acquainted in a gallery of antiquities with a Greek nymph who kept me long a captive in her marble fetters.”

“And you always loved only chiselled or painted women?” tittered Maria.

“No! I have loved dead women too,” replied Maximilian, as a very grave expression came over his features. He did not observe that as he said this Maria seemed to shrink as if terrified, and he continued in a calm voice—

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love is furnished in Mr. F. Anstey's witty novelette, *The Tinted Venus*, where, instead of a man being enamoured of a statue, a statue, vivified, becomes enamoured of a man. The story of Pygmalion and Galatea is thus reversed with the happiest effect.  
—*Translator.*

“Yes, it is very strange how I once fell in love with a girl after she had been dead for seven years. When I first became acquainted with little Very, I was extremely pleased with her. For three days I was deeply interested in her, and took the greatest pleasure in all that she did and said, and in every expression of her piquant, exquisite self, without being in the least sentimentally inclined. Nor was I indeed moved to any extravagant grief when I learned, some months later, that she had suddenly died in consequence of a nervous fever. I forgot her entirely, and I am sure that for years I never thought once about her.

“Seven years had passed away, and I found myself in Potsdam, determined to enjoy the whole beautiful summer in undisturbed solitude. I did not associate with any one; my only company was the statues which are in the garden of Sans Souci.

“It happened one day that certain features, and a strangely winsome voice and gesture, suddenly recurred to me, without my being able to identify the person whom they characterised. Nothing is more annoying than such stumbling about among old memories, and I was therefore surprised as with joy when I, after a few days, all at once recalled little Very, and found that it was *her* charming and forgotten form which had



so strangely moved me. Indeed I rejoiced over this discovery like one who has quite unexpectedly found again his most intimate friend. The faded lines gradually took colour, and at last the sweet little one seemed to be again before me—smiling, pouting, witty, and more beautiful than ever. From this time the darling image would not leave me, it filled all my soul; wherever I went or staid, staid or went, it was by my side—spoke with me, laughed with me, always pleasantly and gently, yet without any special tenderness. But I was every day more and more enchanted by this form, which ever became more and more *real* to me. It is easy to call spirits, but hard to send them again to their dark Nothing—they look at us then so pitifully and imploringly that our hearts cannot resist such earnest prayers. And as I could not tear myself away, the end was that I fell in love with little Very, after she had been dead for seven years.

“So I lived for six months in Potsdam, completely absorbed in this love. I avoided more carefully than ever any touch with the outer world, so that even if any one in the street came too near me I felt a most uncomfortable sensation. I had, as regards any rencontre with people, such a repulsion as night-wandering spirits feel, for it is said that when they meet a living



human being they are as much terrified as the one who sees them. By chance there came through Potsdam a traveller whom I could not avoid—my brother. At seeing him, and hearing from him the last news of the day, I awoke as from a deep dream, and, as if shrinking with alarm, I suddenly felt in what a horrible solitude I had so long been living. I had during this time not even remarked the course of the seasons, and I regarded with amazement the trees, which, having long lost their leaves, were now covered with autumnal hoar-frost. I soon left Potsdam and little Very, and in another city, where important business awaited me, I was, by means of sharp pressure and urgent circumstance, soon driven into harsh reality.

“Ah, heaven!” continued Maximilian, while a painful smile moved his upper lip, “how the living women with whom I then came into unavoidable contact tormented me—delicately tormented me—with their pouting, jealousy, and gasping! In how many balls was I obliged to trot around with them, in how much gossiping scandal must I be mingled? What restless variety, what joy in lying, what kissing-treachery and poisoned flowers! Those ladies knew how to utterly spoil for me all joy and happiness and love, so that for a time I became a woman-hater, who damned the whole sex. It was with me

something as it was with the French officer who, during the Russian campaign, was rescued with trouble from the icy trenches of the Beresina, but who from that time had such an antipathy for everything frozen that he repelled with horror even the sweetest and most delicious ices at Tortoni's. Yes, the memory of the Beresina of love which I then passed made for a time detestable the daintiest dames—women like angels, girls like vanilla-sherbet"—

"I beg you," cried Maria, "do not abuse women! That is the thrashed-out way of speaking among men—mere chaff and cant. After all, to be happy you must have women."

"Oh!" sighed Maximilian, "that is true, of course. But women have but one way to make men happy, and thirty thousand to torment them."

"Dear friend," replied Maria, while she suppressed a smile, "I speak of the harmony of two souls in tune. Have you never felt this happiness? But I see a strange blush on your cheeks—speak, Max!"

"It is true, Maria; I feel like a boy at confessing to you the fortunate love which once made me infinitely happy. Its memory is not lost to me, and my soul often retreats to its cool shade when the burning dust and noonday heat of life become intolerable. But I am not in

condition to give you a clear idea of this loved one. She was of such ethereal nature that she could only appear to me in dreams. I think, Maria, that you have no commonplace prejudice against dreams, for these nightly phenomena have as much reality as those rougher images of the day which we can handle, and with which we are often defiled. Yes, it was in dreams that I saw that dear and lovely being, who, above all others, helped to make life happy. I can tell you little as to her appearance. I really cannot accurately describe her features. Her face was unlike anything which I ever saw before or since. So far as I can remember it was not white and rosy, but all of one tone—a softly crimsoned pale brunette, and transparent as crystal. The charm of this face consisted neither in absolutely perfect symmetry nor in interesting liveliness; its character lay far more in an enchanting yet terrible truthfulness. It was a face full of conscious love and graceful goodness; it was more a soul than a face, and therefore I have never been quite able to present it.<sup>1</sup> The eyes were soft as flowers; the lips somewhat pale, but winsomely curved. She wore a silk dressing-gown of cornflower blue—this was all her dress. The neck and feet were bare, and the delicate tenderness

<sup>1</sup> *Vergegenwärtigen*—"To bring it before (me)." *Gegenwart* is, however, "the present." To recall or realise it.

of the limbs often peeped as if stealthily through the slight, soft garment. Nor can I clearly set forth the words which we spoke; I can only remember that we bound ourselves to one another, and that we caressed and comforted one another, joyfully and happily, frankly and confidently, like bridegroom and bride, or almost like brother and sister. And we often did not talk at all, but gazed into each other's eyes, and in this blissful beholding we remained for eternities. How I *awoke* I know not, but I long revelled in the after-feelings of this happy love. I was long intoxicated with unheard-of delight; the yearning depth of my heart was full of happiness; a joy before unknown seemed to spread over all my feelings, and I remained glad and gay, though I never again saw the loved one of my dreams. But had I not enjoyed whole eternities in her glance? And she indeed knew me too well not to know also that I love no repetitions."

"Truly," cried Maria, "you are *un homme à bonne fortune*. But tell me, was Mademoiselle Laurence a marble statue or a picture, a dear girl, or a dream?"

"Perhaps all together," replied Maximilian, very seriously.

"I can well believe, dear friend, that this love was of a rather doubtful substance. And when will you tell me this story?"

“To-morrow. It is long, and I am tired to-day. I have been in the opera, and have too much music in my ears.”

“You go a great deal to the opera, Max, and I believe that it is more to see than to hear.”

“You are quite right, Maria; I really go to the opera to see the faces of the beautiful Italian women. True, they are pretty enough even outside the theatre, and an investigator into history could, from the ideality of their features, easily trace the influence of the formative<sup>1</sup> arts on the forms of the Italian people. Here Nature has taken back from the artists the capital which she once lent; and lo! it has, in the most enrapturing manner, paid compound interest. The sense of the Beautiful has penetrated all the people; and as the flesh once acted on the spirit, so the spirit now works upon the flesh. And the devotions before those beautiful Madonnas, those lovely altar-pieces, which as Madonnas sink into the soul of the bridegroom while the bride is sensuously impressed by a handsome saint, are not in vain. From such elective affinities a race of human beings has sprung which is even more beautiful than the charming soil on which it springs, or the sunny heaven which flashes round

<sup>1</sup> *Der Einfluss der bildenden Künste.* The fine or cultured arts which shape material and thereby mind. Plastic arts is the usual but less truthful equivalent.



it like a golden frame.<sup>1</sup> The men do not interest me much unless they are painted or sculptured, and I leave to you, Maria, all possible enthusiasm for those handsome, supple Italians who have such wild black beards and noble aquiline noses, and such soft, crafty eyes. They say the Lombards are the finest men. I have never investigated them very closely; I have only earnestly studied the Lombard women, and these I declare are really as beautiful as they are famed to be. But they must even in the Middle Ages have been fairly fair. It is said that the beauty of the ladies of Milan was the reason of the secret impulse which sent Francis the First on his Italian campaign. The knightly king was doubtless desirous of knowing whether his spiritual little cousins, the kinsfolk of his godmothers, were as beautiful as he had heard boasted. Poor rogue! he paid dearly at Pavia for his curiosity.

“But the full beauty of these Italian women is first seen when their faces are lighted up by music. I say *lighted up*, because the effect of music, as I have seen it in the opera, on the faces

<sup>1</sup> This is very beautiful, but of doubtful truth. While there is much beauty and refinement among the more prosperous classes in Italy, it is unquestionably true that a majority of the Italian emigrants who come to the United States are altogether the worst and most degraded-looking foreigners in the country, being rivalled in this respect only by those from the Slavonian slums of Hungary and Austria. I have seen thousands of these emigrants, who come almost entirely from Southern Italy.—*Translator.*

of beautiful women, is quite like those effects of light and shadow which astonish us when we see statues in the night by torchlight. Such marble images then reveal in the terrifying truth their indwelling spirit and awful silent secrets. In like manner the whole life of the beautiful Italians shows itself to us when we see them in the opera; the varying melodies then waken in their souls an array of feelings, memories, wishes, and woes, which at once speak out in the movements of their features, in their blushing, their paleness, and even in their eyes. He who can read may then read in their beautiful faces many sweet and interesting things, stories as strange as the novels of Boccaccio, feelings as tender as the sonnets of Petrarch, whims as odd as the *Ottaverime* of Ariosto—often enough, too, frightful treachery and sublime evil as poetic as the Hell of Dante. Yes, it is worth while to look up at the boxes. If the men would only not meanwhile express their inspiration with such frightful noise. This insane applause in an Italian theatre becomes annoying. But music is the soul of these people, their life, their national cause. In other countries there are certainly musicians who equal the greatest Italian celebrities, but there is no musical multitude like this. Music is represented here in Italy, not by individuals, but reveals itself in the whole population; it has become *the people* itself.

Among us in the North it is quite otherwise; there music has become individual, and is called Mozart or Meyerbeer. And, more than that, when we closely examine the best which such Northern musicians offer us, we find in it Italian sunshine and orange perfume which belong much more to beautiful Italy, the home of music, than to our Germany. Yes, Italy will ever be the home of music, even if its great Maestri sink into the grave or grow silent, even though Bellini die and Rossini is mute."

"True," said Maria, "Rossini has long been still; if I am not mistaken, for ten years."

"That is perhaps a jest of his," replied Maximilian. "He wishes to show that the name of the 'Swan of Pesaro,' which has been given him, is utterly inappropriate. Swans sing at the end of their lives, but Rossini has become silent in the middle of his. And I think that there he did well, and proved himself to be a genius. An artist who has only talent feels to the end of his life the impulse to work it out; he is goaded by ambition; he feels that he is always short of perfection, and he is impelled to attain to the highest. But genius has already given us his highest possible work; he is content; he scorns the world and petty ambition, and goes home as Shakespeare did, or promenades, smiling and jesting, on the Boulevard des Italiens in Paris, like Joachim

Rossini. If the genius enjoys fair physical health he may live in this fashion a long time after he has completed his masterpieces, or, as people say, has fulfilled his mission. It is a mere prejudice or fancy for men to imagine that genius must die young. I think that from thirty to forty years is believed to be the fatal limit of such lives. How often I have teased poor Bellini with this, and prophesied that he in his quality as genius must die as soon as he should attain the dangerous age. Strange, in spite of my jesting tone, he tormented himself over this prophecy; he called me his *jettatore*,<sup>1</sup> and always made the sign of the *jettatura*. He wished so much to live; he had such a passionate antipathy to death that he would not hear it mentioned. He was afraid of it as a child who fears to sleep in the dark. He was a good, dear child himself, sometimes rather naughty; but one only need threaten him with his early death, and he became at once whimpering and praying, and made the *jettatura* with his two uplifted fingers. . . . Poor Bellini!"

"Then you knew him personally? Was he handsome?"

<sup>1</sup> *Jettatore*. One who has the evil eye, and casts (*jetta*) its influence on others. The sign to avert it is made in Southern Italy by grasping the middle and ring finger with the thumb and throwing out the fore and little finger to resemble horns. In Tuscany it is more commonly *la fica*, or *castagna*, that is, closing the fist, so that the thumb protrudes between the third and middle finger.

“He was not plain. You see that we men also cannot answer affirmatively when such a question is put to us regarding one of our own sex. He was of tall, slender form, as one who had suddenly shot up, who moved and gestured daintily, I might say coquettishly, always *à quatre épingles*;<sup>1</sup> regular features, rather long and pale; light blonde, almost golden hair, *friséd* in little locks; a very high and noble forehead, a straight nose, very light blue eyes, a beautifully proportioned mouth, and round chin. His traits had in them something vague, devoid of character or milk-like, and in this milk-face there often curled sweet-sourly an expression of pain. This anguished look supplied in Bellini’s face the want of wit and spirit,<sup>2</sup> but it was a pain without depth; it shone dimly and without poetry in his eyes, and quivered without passion on his lips. This flat, insipid suffering seemed to be affected by the young maestro after a bygone fashion. His hair was curled in such a dreamy-visionary, melancholy manner, his clothes fitted his dainty form so yearningly and sentimentally, he carried his little bamboo cane so idyllically, that he always reminded me of those young, old-fashioned lovers whom we see in rococo-shepherd plays acting affectedly with ribboned crooks and light-

<sup>1</sup> *Tiré à quatre épingles.* Said of one who has taken extreme pains to be well or showily dressed.

<sup>2</sup> *Geist, esprit.*



coloured jackets and beautiful little breeches! And his gait was so maidenly, so elegant, so ethereal! The whole man looked like a sighing swain *en escarpins*. The ladies doated on him, but I doubt whether he ever inspired a great passion. To me his personal appearance always had in it something drolly unpleasant, the real reason for which was perhaps his manner of speaking French. For though he had lived several years in France, he spoke its language so badly that its like was not to be heard even in England. I will not say that he spoke it *badly*, for the word *bad* would here be entirely too good. One must say outrageously, incestuously, world-destroyingly—as a cataclysm. Yes, when one was in society with him, and he like a public executioner broke the poor French words on the wheel, and without sign or trembling dealt out a tremendous *coq à l'âne*, one felt as if the very world must split as with a thunder-crack. A deathly stillness then spread over the entire hall, for death himself seemed to be painting terror on every face with chalk and cinnabar; ladies knew not whether they should faint or fly; men looked in sudden amazement at their breeches to realise that they really wore such things; and, what was worst of all, this horror awoke at the same time a convulsive, maddening desire to laugh which could hardly be repressed.

Therefore if any one sat by Bellini in society, his neighbourhood inspired a certain anxious apprehension which was sure to excite a horrible interest at once attractive and repulsive. Very often his unconscious puns were simply amusing, and in their monkey-like unmeaningness reminded one of the castle of his fellow-countryman, the Prince of Pallagonia, which is described by Goethe in his Italian journey as a museum of baroque eccentricities and rubbishy monstrosities, huddled together without rhyme or reason. As Bellini always believed on such occasions that he had said something quite harmless and serious, his face formed the drollest contrast with his words. Then it was that that which was unpleasing in his expression came out most cuttingly. Yet what I did not like in it was not, however, of such a kind that it could be described as a defect, and it certainly was not unpleasing to ladies. Bellini's face, like his whole physique, had that physical freshness, that blooming sensuousness, that rose-colour which makes on *me* a disagreeable impression—on me, I say, because I like much better that which is death-like and of marble.<sup>1</sup> It was not till a

<sup>1</sup> Heine here speaks very sincerely. This was the tone, and indeed the cant, of the Romantics in the Thirties. "Oh, I like to look gloomy and melancholy!" said in those days in my hearing a young man who had been told that his dressing in black gave him a sombre appearance.

later time, when I began to know Bellini, that I felt a liking for him. This came from observing that his character was perfectly noble and good. His soul is certainly pure, and has remained unspotted by contact with vile things. Nor was there wanting in him that harmless good-nature, or the childlike, such as is never wanting in *genial* men, even if they do not show it to every one.

“Yes, I remember,” continued Maximilian, as he sank on the seat by which he had so far stood upright, leaning on the arm. “I remember a single instant during which Bellini appeared to me in such a charming light that I regarded him with pleasure, and determined to learn to know him more intimately. But it was unfortunately the last time I was destined to see him in this life. This was one evening after supper in the house of a great lady, who had the smallest foot in Paris, and when he had become merry, and the sweetest melodies rang from the pianoforte. I can see him now, the good Bellini, when, exhausted by the many mad Bellinisms which he had chattered, he sat on a seat—it was very low, almost like a footstool, so that he found himself at the feet of a fair lady who had reclined opposite him on a sofa, and with sweet mischievousness looked down on him, while he toiled away to entertain her with a few French phrases, getting ever

deeper into difficulties, commenting in his Sicilian jargon in order to prove that what he said was not foolish, but, on the contrary, the most refined flattery. I do not think that the beautiful lady paid much attention to Bellini's phrases. She had taken his little cane, where-with he often helped himself out of weak places in rhetoric, and calmly used it to disarrange the elaborate arrangement of the hair on both temples of the young maestro. This caprice well became the smile which gave her features an expression such as I have never seen on a living human face. It was one of those which belong far more to the dream-realm of poetry than to the rough reality of life—contours recalling Da Vinci, that noble soul!—with the naive dimples in the chin, and the sentimental pointed-out bending chin of the Lombard school. The colour was rather of a Roman softness, a mother-of-pearl gleam, aristocratic paleness—*morbidezza*. In short, it was such a face as can only be found in old Italian portraits, in which the masters of the sixteenth century depicted as a master-work the portraits of great ladies whom they loved—such as poets sang when they sang for immortality, and such as German and French heroes yearned for when they girded on their swords, and seeking great deeds rushed over the Alps. Yes, yes, it was such a face, in which there

played a smile of sweetest mischief and of aristocratic waywardness, while she, the fair lady, disarranged the blonde locks of good Bellini with the bamboo cane. At that instant Bellini seemed to be transfigured to some utterly strange apparition, and all at once he became allied to my heart. His face shone in the reflected light of that smile; it was perhaps the goldenest moment of his life. I shall never forget him. Fourteen days after I read in the newspapers that Italy had lost one of her most famous sons.

“Strangely enough the death of Paganini was announced at the same time. I did not doubt this in the least, because the old faded Paganini always looked like a dying man, but the death of the young and rosy Bellini seemed incredible. And yet the announcement of the death of the first was simply an error of the press. Paganini is alive and well at Genoa, and Bellini lies in his grave in Paris.”

“Do you like Paganini?” asked Maria.

“This man,” exclaimed Maximilian, “is a glory to his country, and certainly deserves the most distinguished mention if one will speak of the musical notabilities of Italy.”

“I have never seen him,” said Maria, “but according to report his exterior does not perfectly set forth the beautiful—— I have seen portraits of him”——



“None of which were like him,” said Maximilian. “They all make him too ugly, or else flatter him, and do not give his true character. I think that only one man ever succeeded in putting the true physiognomy of Paganini on paper. He who did it is a deaf painter named Leyser, who, in his inspired frolicking, hit off with a few pencil strokes the head of Paganini so well that one laughs and is frightened at the truth of the portrait. ‘The devil guided my hand,’ said the artist to me, mysteriously laughing low, and nodding his head with good-natured irony as he was wont to do in his Owlglass reflections. This painter was always a queer owl. In spite of his deafness he loved music enthusiastically, and he really understood it when he was near enough to the orchestra to read the music in the faces of the musicians, and judge of the more or less successful execution by the fingering; and, in fact, he wrote criticisms of the operas for a distinguished journal in Hamburg. What is there wonderful in that? The deaf painter could, in the visible signature of the playing, *see the tones*. Are there not men to whom tones themselves are only invisible signatures in which they hear colours and forms?”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Heine was the first to make known in French this style of using æsthetic correspondences or signatures—to borrow a term from Swedenborg. It was carried to a ridiculous excess by his imitators, one of whom, in speaking of a ballet-girl, said: “The colour of her dancing is pyramidal.” But Heine himself is occasionally extravagant in its use.

“Such a man are *you!*” cried Maria.

“I am sorry that I no longer possess the little drawing by Leyser; it would perhaps give you an idea of Paganini’s appearance. It was only in harsh, black, fleeting strokes that one could set forth those unearthly traits which seemed to belong rather to the sulphurous realm of shadows than to the sunny world of life. ‘Truly the devil guided my hand,’ asserted the deaf painter, as we stood by Alster pavilion in Hamburg on the day when Paganini gave his first concert there. ‘Yes, my friend, it is true, what the whole world declares, that he has given himself over to the devil, body and soul, in order to become the best violinist in the world, and fiddle millions of money, and finally to get away from the damned galleys where he had suffered many years.<sup>1</sup> For, you see, friend, when he was leader of the orchestra in Lucca, he fell in love with a theatrical princess, became jealous of a little abbé,

<sup>1</sup> It seems incredible that within my recollection Paganini (or his impresario) could have excited an extraordinary interest in the public by circulating such reports. Many laughed at them, but far more were moved or affected. “Who knows; there might be something in it.” It was commonly said that Paganini had imprisoned the soul of his mother in his violin. This made a great impression on me, being at the time a small boy, and I can remember being detected by my mother in company with a younger brother engaged in killing a fly or bee in a toy violin—our intention being that its soul should eternally buzz in the instrument.—*Translator.*

was perhaps made *cocu*, stabbed his untrue Amata in good Italian fashion, went for that to the galleys in Genoa, and at last sold himself to the devil to be delivered and to become the greatest violin-player, and be able to get out of us a tribute—of two thalers. . . . But, look! “All good spirits praise God!”<sup>1</sup> there he comes in the Avenue with his ambiguous *famulus!*’

“In fact it was Paganini himself whom I beheld. He wore a dark-grey overcoat, which came to his feet, making him appear extremely tall. His long black hair fell in tangled locks on his shoulders, forming a dark frame for the pale, corpse-like countenance, in which care, genius, and hell combined had graved their ineffaceable signs. By him capered along a short, comfortable-looking figure, commonplace, showy in dress, with a rosy wrinkled face, light-grey short coat with steel buttons, greeting right and left with irresistible amiability, but all the time squinting sideways with anxious apprehension at the dark form which, serious and reflecting, walked by his side. It recalled the picture by Retzsch, in which Faust is walking with Wagner before the gate of Leipzig. The deaf artist commented on both figures in his wild fashion, and bade me observe carefully the measured long step of Paganini. ‘Is it not,’ he said, ‘as if he still had the iron

<sup>1</sup> An old German invocation against dreaded spirits, spectres, &c.

cross rod between his legs? He has got the convict step and can never lose it. See how contemptuously and ironically he often looks down at his companion when he bores him with *his* commonplace questions;—and yet he cannot get rid of him—a bloody contract binds him to that servant, who is Satan himself. Ignorant people think, of course, that this companion is the writer of comedies and anecdotes, Harrys of Hanover, whom Paganini takes with him as business-manager for his concerts; but the multitude does not know that the devil took the form of Mr. George Harrys, the soul he keeps locked up with other rubbish in a chest in Hanover, where it will remain till the devil restores its proper fleshly envelope, when he will probably accompany his master, Paganini, through the world in the more befitting form of a black poodle.’

“But if Paganini seemed to me sufficiently incredible and wonderful as I saw him walking under the green leaves of the Hamburg Jungferensteig, what were my impressions of his fearfully eccentric apparition that evening in the concert! This was given in the Comedy Theatre of Hamburg, and the art-loving public had assembled so early and in such numbers that it was with difficulty that I conquered a place by the orchestra. Though it was post-day I saw in the balcony-boxes the whole refined and cultured

business world<sup>1</sup>—a whole Olympus of bankers and similar millionaires, the gods of coffee and sugar, with their plump wife-goddesses, Junos of the Wandrahm and Aphrodites of Dreckwall. There was a holy quiet in all the hall. Every eye was turned to the stage, every ear prepared to hear. My neighbour, an old huckster in furs, took the cotton from his ears, the better to take in the expensive tones, which cost two dollars entrance-money. At last there appeared on the stage a dark figure, which seemed to have risen from the under-world. It was Paganini, in his black dress suit;<sup>2</sup> the black evening coat and black waistcoat, of an appalling cut, were probably such as are prescribed by infernal etiquette at the court of Proserpine, while the loose trousers flapped vexatiously on the thin legs of the maestro. His long arms seemed to grow yet longer, as he held the violin in one hand, the bow down in the other, and almost bowed to the ground as he bestowed on the public his unheard-of reverence. In the angular bending of his body there was a fearful woodenness, and at the same time something foolishly brute-like, which would have caused laughter at his salutation; but

<sup>1</sup> *Die ganze gebildete Handelswelt.*

<sup>2</sup> At the time here in question an entire suit of black for any one not in mourning was unusual enough to attract attention. Dumas mentions it as something *distingué* in the Count of Monte Christo.



his *face*, which, in the strong orchestral illumination, seemed more corpse-like than ever, had in it something so bashfully modest that a shuddering pity suppressed our desire to laugh. Had he learned those bows from an automaton or a dog? Was that imploring look that of one in deathly illness, or was there lurking behind it the mockery of a crafty money-grubber? Was that a living man, who knows that he is about to perish and who will delight the public in the arena of art, like a dying gladiator with his convulsions or a dead man risen from the grave, a vampire with a violin, who, if he does not suck blood from our hearts, will, come what may, draw the money from our pockets?

“Such questions crossed one another flitting in our heads while Paganini made his unceasing compliments in gesture, but all such thoughts flitted afar when the wondrous master set his violin to his chin and began to play. As for me, you know well my musical second sight—my gift of seeing with every note which I hear its corresponding figure of sound; and so it came that Paganini, with every stroke of his bow, brought visible forms and facts before my eyes; that he told me in a musical picture-writing all kinds of startling stories; that he juggled before me at the same time a show of coloured Chinese shadows, in all of which he with his violin was

chief actor. Even with the first note from his bow the scene changed; he stood all at once with his music-desk in a cheerful hall, which was gaily and irregularly decorated with curved and twining furniture in the Pompadour style, everywhere little mirrors, gilt cupids, Chinese porcelain, an exquisitely charming chaos of ribbons, flower garlands, white gloves, torn laces, false pearls, diadems of gilt sheet metal, and similar celestial theatrical properties, such as one sees in the sanctum of a prima donna. Paganini's external appearance had also changed, very much indeed to his advantage;<sup>1</sup> he wore knee-breeches of lilac satin, a silver embroidered white waistcoat, a coat of light-blue satin with buttons wound with gold; and little locks of carefully curled hair played round his face, which bloomed with the roses of youth and gleamed with sweetest tenderness, when he eyed the pretty little dames who stood round his music-desk while he played his violin.

“Indeed I saw by his side a pretty young creature, in old-fashioned dress of white satin puffed out on the hips, the waist seeming for that all the more piquantly narrow, the powdered hair friséed aloft, the pretty round face flashing

<sup>1</sup> Heine called himself a romanticist, but as regards the practical art of life and its associations, his heart was really in the later Renaissance, or Baroque period of the Regency.—*Translator.*

out all the more freely with its dazzling eyes, its rouged cheeks, court plaster beauty-patches, and impertinent sweet little nose. She held in her hand a white scroll of paper, and by the movements of her lips, and the coquettish movements of her form, seemed to be singing, but I could not hear one of her trills, and it was only by the playing of the violin with which the youthful Paganini accompanied the charming child that I could imagine what she sang, and what he himself felt in his soul while she sang. Ah! those were melodies such as the nightingale flutes in the twilight, when the perfume of the rose intoxicates her sympathetic heart, inspired by Spring with deepest longing. Ah! that was a melting, voluptuous, deep-desiring happiness! There were tones which kissed, and then, pouting, turned away, and again laughing, embraced and melted together, and then lost, enraptured, intoxicated, died away in one. Yes, the tones mingled in gay sport, like butterflies when one in jest flies from another, hides itself behind a flower, is found and hunted out, and finally, light-hearted and trifling, flutters up with the other—up into the golden sunlight. But a spider—a vile spider—can bring about a dire tragedy for such enamoured butterflies. Did the young heart divine aught like *that*? A long melancholy sighing tone, like the premonition of a coming evil, slid slowly through

the most enrapturing melodies which flashed from Paganini's playing; his eyes became moist; worshipping he knelt before his Amata—but oh! as he bowed to kiss her feet he saw beneath the bed—a little abbé! I do not know what he had against the poor man, but the Genoese became pale as death; he grappled in rage the little fellow, gave him boxes on the ear and not a few kicks, hurled him headlong out of doors, and then, drawing a stiletto from his pocket, plunged it into the breast of the young beauty.

“At that instant cries of ‘Bravo! Bravo!’ rang from every side. Hamburg’s inspired men and women paid their tribute of the most roaring applause to the great artist, who had ended the first part of his concert, and who with more angles and contortions than before bowed before them. It seemed to me that in his face was a more imploring humility than ever, but in his eyes flickered a tormenting fear like a wretched sinner’s.

“‘Divine!’ cried my neighbour, the fur-dealer; ‘that piece alone was well worth two thalers.’

“When Paganini began to play again it seemed to be dark before my eyes. The tones did not change as before into bright shapes and hues; the form of the Master wrapped itself in gloomy shadows, from whose depth his music came wail-

ing in the most cutting accents of sorrow. Only from time to time, as a little lamp which hung over him cast a feeble light on his features, could I see his pallid countenance, which still retained traces of youth. His garb was strange indeed—divided in two parts, one red, one yellow. Heavy fetters hung to his feet. Behind him grimaced a face whose physiognomy indicated a jovial, he-goat nature; and I saw long, hairy hands which seemed to belong to it, moving now and then on the strings of the violin which Paganini played, often guiding his hand, while a floating, applauding laugh accompanied the tones which welled forth more painfully, and as if bleeding, from the violin. They were tones like the song of the fallen angels who had wooed and wantoned with the daughters of Earth, and been banished from the kingdom of the blest, and fallen, with cheeks burning with shame, into the under-world: tones in whose bottomless abyss there was neither comfort nor hope. Should the holy in heaven hear such music the praise of God would be mute on their pale lips, and they, weeping, would hide their pious heads. Ever and anon, when in the melodious torments of this piece the *obligato* goat-laughter came bleating in, I saw in the background a multitude of little female figures, who, spitefully-merry, nodded their horrible heads and rubbed their breasts in mocking mischief.



Then there came in hurried crowds from the violin sounds of pain, and a terrible sighing and gasping, such as no one ever heard on earth before, and perhaps will never hear again, unless it shall be in the Vale of Jehoshaphat, when the tremendous trumpets of the Last Judgment ring out, and the naked corpses creep from their graves to await their doom. But the tormented violinist suddenly drew his bow so madly and desperately that his rattling feters burst, and the diabolical ally with the mocking demons disappeared.

“At that instant my neighbour, the fur-dealer, said, ‘Pity! pity! he has burst a string. That comes of his constant *pizzicato!*’<sup>1</sup>

“Had a string really burst on the violin? I do not know. I only observed the transfiguration of the tones, and then it seemed to me as if Paganini and all his surroundings were again suddenly changed. I could hardly recognise him in the brown monk’s dress, which rather disguised than clothed him. His wild and wasted face half-hidden by the hood, a rope round his waist, Paganini stood on a cliff overhanging the sea, and played his violin. It seemed to me to be twilight tide; evening-flame flowed

<sup>1</sup> Said to have been a trick of Paganini’s, who could play admirably on three or two strings, or even one, as no one ever did before or since.

over the broad sea, which grew redder and redder, and rustled and roared more gaily and wildly in mysterious and perfect harmony with the violin. But the redder the sea became so much the more pallid grew the heaven, and when at last the waving water looked like bright scarlet blood, then the sky overhead became ghostly clear, all corpse-white, and out came the stars—and these stars were black, black as shining anthracite. But the tones of the violin grew more stormy and bolder, and in the eyes of the terrible player there sparkled such a mocking delight in destroying, and his thin lips moved with such appalling rapidity, that it was clear he was murmuring ancient forbidden witch-spells with which storms are called up and those evil spirits evoked who lie imprisoned in the sea's abyss. Many a time did he, when stretching forth his long, lean, bare arm, and sweeping the bow in the air, seem to be in sooth and truth a wizard who, with a magic staff, commanded the elements, for then there was a mad, delirious howling in the depths of the sea, and the furious waves of blood leaped up so furiously on high that they almost besprinkled the pale heaven and its black stars with their red foam.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In 1832-33 there was to be seen in every music-shop window a picture representing Paganini as a sorcerer fiddling among witches and imps.—*Translator.*

There was howling, crashing, cracking, as if the whole world was breaking to fragments, while the monk played more madly on his violin, as if he would, by the power of his raging will, burst the seven seals wherewith Solomon closed the iron jar in which he imprisoned the demons whom he had subdued. That jar the wise king cast into the sea, and it seemed as if I heard the voices of the demons when Paganini's violin growled out its angriest basso notes. But after a while I thought I heard the joyous cry of those set free, and I saw rising one by one out of the red waves of blood the heads of the unchained demons, monsters of incredible hideousness, crocodiles with bat's wings, serpents with stag's horns, monkeys capped with conch shells, seals with patriarchal long beards, women's faces with breasts instead of cheeks, green camels' heads, wild hybrids of inconceivable composition,<sup>1</sup> all glaring greedily with cold crafty eyes, and grasping, with long webbed feet and fingers, at the fiddling monk. Then in the raging zeal of invocation his capote fell back, and the ringlets flying in the wind curled round his head like black serpents.

“It was all so maddening, that not to utterly

<sup>1</sup> All of these monsters, excepting perhaps the green camels' heads, which I do not remember, are to be found in pictures by Höllen-Breughel and Callot.—*Translator.*

lose my mind I stopped my ears and closed my eyes. Then the enchantment disappeared, and when I looked again I saw the poor Genoese in his wonted form making his usual bows, while the public applauded rapturously.

“That is the celebrated performance on the G string,” remarked my neighbour. ‘I play the violin myself, and know what it is to have such mastery over the instrument!’

“Fortunately the interval was not long, else my musical fur-dealer had certainly involved me in a tiresome talk on art. Paganini set his violin leisurely to his chin, and with the first touch of his bow, there began again the wondrous transfiguration of tones. But now they were neither so startling in colour or so marked in form. They came forth calmly, majestically, waving and rising like those of an organ choral in a cathedral; and all the surroundings seemed to have expanded to a colossal space, such as no bodily vision but only the eye of the spirit can grasp. In the midst of this space swept a burning ball, on which stood a man of giant stature and grand in pride, who played the violin. Was this sphere of light the sun? I know not. But in the features of the man I recognised Paganini, ideally beautified, celestially refined, atoned for divinely, and smiling. This body was fresh and fair in vigorous manliness; a light-blue garment was about his now far

nobler limbs, the black hair flowed in shining locks on his shoulders, and as he stood there, firm and confidently, like the sublime statue of a god, and played the violin, it seemed as if all creation obeyed his tones. He was the man-planet round whom the universe moved, ringing with measured joy and in happy rhythm. Were those great lights which swept so calmly gleaming round him stars of heaven? Were those sweet-sounding harmonies which were caused by their motion, the music of the spheres, of which poets and seers have told so much that is bewildering and strange? Sometimes when with an effort I looked forth and far into the dim distance, I seemed to see white waving garments, in which colossal pilgrims wandered in disguise, with staves in their hands; and, strange! the gold heads of their staves were those same great lights which I had taken for stars. These pilgrims went in a vast procession around the great player; the heads of their staves flashed reflected light from the tones of his violin; and the chorals which rang from their lips, and which I had taken for the noise of the spheres, were really only the rebounding echoes of his violin. An ineffable, nameless passion dwelt in these sounds, which often quivered almost inaudibly, like mysterious whispering on water, then again swelled up sweetly-terrible, like the tones of hunters' horns



by moonlight,<sup>1</sup> and then burst out into unbridled rejoicing, as though a thousand bards were sweeping the strings and raising their voices in a song of victory. That was the music which no ear has heard, only the heart can dream it when by night it rests against the heart of the beloved. But it may be that the heart comprehends it even in the clear, bright daylight, when it rejoicing loses itself in the lines of beauty and ovals of a Greek work of art."

"Or when a man had had a bottle too much of champagne," cried a laughing voice, which woke our narrator as if from a dream. As he turned he saw the doctor, who, with black Deborah, had softly entered the room to learn what effect his medicine had had on the invalid.

"I do not like this sleep," said the doctor, as he pointed to the sofa.

Maximilian, who, sunk in the fantasies of his own speech, had not observed that Maria had long been asleep, bit his lips as if vexed.

"This sleep," continued the doctor, "gives the face an appearance which has all the character of death. Does it not look like one of

<sup>1</sup> This seems to have been suggested by a very wild and beautiful German song and melody:—

"There is a hunter who blows his horn,  
And ever by the night!  
He blows the deer from out the corn,  
And ever by the night!"

those white masks, or plaster casts, in which we try to preserve the traits of the departed?"

"And I would like," whispered Maximilian, "to have such a cast of our friend. She will be very beautiful, even in death."

"I advise you not to have it," replied the doctor. "Such masks lead astray our memories of the loved ones. We feel as if there was in them something of their lives still kept, while that which is really retained is actually death itself. Features which are regular and beautiful then become hard and frozen, satirical, or repulsive,<sup>1</sup> by which they terrify us more than they please. But casts become complete caricatures when they are from faces whose charm was of a spiritual, refined nature, and whose features were less regular than interesting, for as soon as the graces of life are extinguished in them the actual departures from the ideal lines of beauty are no longer balanced by mental charms. One thing also is common to all these casts—it is a certain enigmatic expression which, the more we study them, the more it runs shivering like frost through the soul: they all look like people who intend to take a long journey."

"And whither?" asked Maximilian, as the doctor took his arm and led him forth.

<sup>1</sup> *Fatales*. Absolutely adverse or destructive.

## SECOND NIGHT.

“AND why will you torment me with this horrible medicine, since I must die so soon?”

Maria had just said this, as Maximilian had entered the room. The physician stood before her holding in one hand a vial of medicine, in the other a little cup, in which foamed a very unpleasant-looking brownish liquid.

“My dearest friend,” he said to Maximilian, “your presence is very much needed just now. I beg you try to induce Signora to swallow these few drops. I am in a great hurry.”

“I beg you, Maria!” said Maximilian, in the soft voice which was not often heard from him, and which seemed to come from a pained heart, so that the patient, deeply moved, almost forgetting her own suffering, took the cup. But ere she put it to her mouth she said, smiling: “To reward me you will tell the story of Laurence?”

“All that you desire shall be done,” assented Maximilian.

The pale lady drank the contents of the cup, half smiling, half shuddering.

“I am in a hurry,” said the doctor, as he drew on his black gloves. “Lie down calmly, Signora

and move as little as possible. I am in a hurry."

He left the room accompanied by black Deborah, who lighted him forth. When the two friends were alone they looked at one another for a long time in silence. There were thoughts in the souls of both which neither would express. Then the woman suddenly grasped the man's hand and covered it with burning kisses.

"For God's sake!" said Maximilian, "do not exert yourself so much, and lie calmly on the sofa."

As Maria obeyed him, he very carefully covered her feet with the shawl, which he first kissed. She must have seen this, for her eyes twinkled like those of a happy child.

"Was Mademoiselle Laurence very beautiful?"

"If you will not interrupt me, dear friend, and promise to be calm and quiet, I will tell you circumstantially all that you wish to hear."

Smiling at the assenting glance of Maria, Maximilian sat on the chair before the sofa, and thus began his story:—

"It is now eight years since I went to London to learn the language and people there. The devil take the people with their language! They take a dozer monosyllables in mouth, chew them,

crush them, and spit them out, and call that talking. But by good luck they are naturally tolerably taciturn, and though they always stare at us open-mouthed they at least spare us long conversations. But woe to him who meets a son of Albion who has made the grand tour, and learned to speak French. He will avail himself of the opportunity to practise the language, and overwhelm us with questions as to all subjects conceivable, and hardly is one answered before he begins with another either as to our age or home or how long we intend to remain where we are, and he believes that this incessant questioning is the best method to entertain us.<sup>1</sup> One of my friends in Paris is perhaps right when he declares that the English learn to converse in French at the *Bureau des passeports*. Their conversation is most edifying at table when they carve their colossal roast beef, and with the most serious air ask us what part we prefer, rare or well done, from the middle or the brown outside, fat or lean? But roast beef and mutton are all they have

<sup>1</sup> There are many extraordinary conceptions in this work—that of comparing Paganini to Jehovah is not bad in its way—but for a tremendous perversion of truth this accusation of the English as impertinent questioners is unsurpassed. I have travelled much in my life and know the English fairly well, and consider that of all people on the face of the earth they mind their own business most, and are least given to such queries.—*Translator*.



which is good.<sup>1</sup> Heaven keep every Christian from their gravies, which are made of one-third meal and two-thirds butter, or when a change is needed, one-third butter and two-thirds meal: And Heaven guard every one from their naïve vegetables which, boiled away in water, are brought to the tables just as God made them! But more terrible than the cookery of the English are their toasts, with the obligatory standing speeches when the table-cloth is removed and the ladies departed, and so many bottles of port are in their place, which are supposed to be the best substitute for the fair sex; but I may well say the *fair* sex, for English women deserve this name. They are beautiful, white, tall creatures, only the too great space between the mouth and nose, which is as common among them as with the men, often spoiled for me, in England, the most beautiful faces. This departure from the type of the beautiful impresses me more horribly when I see English people here in Italy, where their sparingly measured noses, and the broad space between them and the mouth, make a more startling contrast with the faces of the Italians,

<sup>1</sup> "Maximilian," it would appear, while in London, had access only to the plainest City ordinaries. But in this style of description he is far outdone by a noble French tourist, who declares, in a recently published book of travels, that in *all* the United States he found *nothing* fit to eat. This is worse even than plain roasts.—*Translator*.

whose traits are of a more antique regularity, and whose noses, either aquiline like the Roman or straight like the Greek, often go into excess of length. It was very well remarked by a German that the English, when among Italians, look like statues with the noses knocked off.

“ Yes, when we meet English people in a foreign country their defects first become striking by comparison. They are the gods of ennui, who, in shining, varnished coaches, drive extra-post through every country, and leave everywhere a grey dust-cloud of sadness behind them.<sup>1</sup> Hence comes their curiosity without interest, their bedizened, over-dressed coarseness,<sup>2</sup> their insolent bashfulness, their angular egotism, and their dismal delight in all melancholy things. For three weeks we have seen every day on the Piazza del gran Duca an Englishman who stands for hours gaping at the charlatan who, while seated on a horse, draws teeth. This spectacle is perhaps for the noble son of Albion an equivalent for the executions which he neglected to attend in his

<sup>1</sup> It is very characteristic of nervous, frivolous natures that they cannot conceive of gravity or calmness except as associated with dulness and suffering. The North American Indians are the most imperturbable of mortals, but they certainly suffer less from ennui than any others. But Heine had in reality only a very second-hand stage-knowledge of the English.

<sup>2</sup> *Geputzte Plumphet.* This implies rather a burly bluntness, not very much given to consider refined feelings. It is a little less than literal coarseness.

dear native land. For after boxing and cock-fighting there is no sight so delightful to a Briton as the agony of a poor devil who has stolen a sheep or imitated a signature, and who is exhibited for an hour before the *façade* of the Old Bailey with a rope round his neck before he is hurled into eternity. It is no exaggeration to say that sheep-stealing and forgery in that abominably cruel country are punished not less severely than the most revolting crimes, such as parricide and incest. I myself happening to come that way by mere chance, saw a man hung in London for stealing a sheep, and from that time forth lost all relish for roast mutton—the fat always put me in mind of the white cap of the poor sinner.<sup>1</sup> With him was hanged an Irishman, who had imitated the writing of a rich banker, and I think I can still see the naïve deathly agony of poor Paddy, who before the assizes could not understand why he was so severely punished

<sup>1</sup> Heine appears to be oblivious here to the fact that within his own lifetime criminals were publicly broken on the wheel in Germany. His sympathy for the Irishman who swindled "a rich banker" is but natural, if we may believe what is told in his *Lives*, that he himself, when in England, having been intrusted by his uncle with a letter of credit, on the express condition that he should only use a part of it, *drew the whole*. When his uncle found fault with him for this, the nephew asked him, with an audacious insolence that staggered the great banker, "My dear uncle, did you really expect not to have to pay for the honour of bearing my name?"—*Translator*.

for imitating other men's signatures, when he was quite willing to let any mortal man imitate his own! And these people talk always about Christianity, and go to church every Sunday, and flood the world with Bibles!<sup>1</sup>

“ I must own, Maria, that if nothing was to my taste in England, neither men nor meat, the fault lay partly in myself. I had brought a good stock of ill-temper and discontent with me from home, and I sought to be cheered up by a race which can only subdue its own ennui in the whirlpool of political and mercantile action. The perfection of machinery, which is there everywhere applied to some purpose, and which executes so many human tasks, had for me something mysterious and terrible; the artificial headlong action of wheels, shafts, cylinders, with a thousand small hooks, cogs, and teeth, which whirl so madly, filled me with dread. The definiteness, the exactness, the meted out and measured punctuality of life, tormented me quite as much, for as the machines in England seem like men, so the men seem to me like mere machines. Yes, wood, iron, and brass, these seem to have usurped the spirit of humanity, and often to be raging with fulness of intelligence, while Man,

<sup>1</sup> Hardly to be cited as inconsistent. Ananias and Sapphira were struck dead—very deservedly—for cheating the Christian community out of a small sum and lying.—*Translator.*

with his soul gone, attends like a machine to his business and affairs; eats at the appointed minute his beefsteak, delivers parliamentary speeches, brushes his nails, mounts the stage-coach, or—hangs himself.

“ How my displeasure and discontent increased every day in this land, you may well imagine. But nothing could surpass the gloomy mood which once came over me as I, towards evening, stood on Waterloo Bridge and looked down into the Thames. It seemed to me as if my soul, with all its scars, was mirrored there, and looked up at me from the water. Then the most distressing memories vexed my mind. I thought of the rose daily sprinkled with vinegar, which thereby paid penance with its sweetest perfume, and prematurely died; of the stray butterfly, whom a naturalist who once climbed Mont Blanc saw fluttering in solitude among blocks of ice; of the tame she-monkey, who was so familiar with men that she played and ate with them; but one day she recognised in the roast on the table her own little one, and, catching it up, rushed into the forest, and never came among mankind again. Ah! I was so wretched and sad that the hot tears leapt from my eyes; they fell into the Thames, and swam forth into the great ocean, which has already swallowed so many without observing them.



“It happened at this instant that a strange music woke me from my dark dreams, and, looking round, I saw a group of people who seemed to form a ring round some entertaining show. I drew near, and saw a family of artists consisting of these four persons.

“Firstly, a little dumpy woman, dressed in black, who had a very little head, and before her a very big drum, on which she hammered away without mercy.

“Secondly, a dwarf, who wore an embroidered coat like that of an old French marquis, and had a great, powdered head, but very slender limbs, and who, while skipping, beat a triangle.

“Thirdly, a girl of perhaps fifteen years, who wore a short, close-fitting jacket of blue-striped silk, with full, wide trousers to match. It was an aerial and charming figure, the face of a perfectly beautiful Greek type. She had a noble, straight nose, beautifully curled lips, a dreamy, softly-rounded chin, her complexion sunny brown, with the shining black hair wound over the temples. Thus she stood, tall and serious, as it seemed out of tune or in ill-temper, and looked at the fourth member of the troupe, who was engaged in an artistic performance.

“This fourth person was a learned dog—a very promising poodle—who had, to the great delight of the English public, put together, from the

wooden letters laid before him, the name of LORD WELLINGTON, and added to it the very flattering word HERO. And as the dog, as one could easily see by his intelligent appearance, was no English brute, but had come with the other three performers from France, the sons of Albion rejoiced that their great general had, at least from the dogs of France, that recognition of his greatness which was so meanly denied to him by the other creatures of that country.

“This company was in fact French, and the dwarf, who announced himself as Monsieur Tur-lutu, began to bluster and boast in French with such passionate gestures that the poor English gaped with their mouths, and lifted their noses higher than ever. He often, after a long sentence, crowed like a cock, and these cock-a-doodle-does, and the names of many emperors, kings, and princes which he scattered here and there, were all that the poor spectators understood. He boasted that these emperors, kings, and princes had been his patrons and friends. Even when only eight years of age he had, as he declared, held a long conversation with his late majesty Louis XVI., who subsequently frequently consulted him in most important affairs. He had, like many others, escaped the storms of the Revolution, nor was it till the Empire that he returned to his dear native land to take part in the glory

of *la grande nation*. Napoleon, he declared, had never liked him, but he had been almost idolised by His Holiness Pope Pius the Seventh. The Emperor Alexander had given him bon-bons, and the Princess Wilhelm von Kyritz always took him on her lap. His Serene Highness, Duke Karl of Brunswick, had let him ride many a time on his dog, and His Majesty King Louis of Bavaria had read to him his sublime poems. The princes of Reuss Schleiz-Kreuz and of Schwarzburg-Sondershausen loved him like a brother, and always smoked from the same pipe with him. Yes, from childhood, he declared, he had always lived only among sovereigns; the contemporary monarchs had grown up familiar with him, he regarded them as his equals, and always wore mourning when one of them passed away. After these words of weight he crowed again like a cock.

“Monsieur Turlutu was really one of the most curious dwarfs whom I had ever seen, for his wrinkled, ancient face formed such a conical contrast to his little, childlike body, and his whole person contrasted yet more funnily with his feats. For he next assumed the most defiant positions, and with an inhumanly long rapier stabbed the air right and left, while he incessantly swore on his honour that this *carte* or that *tierce* could not be parried by any one, that his parade was

unassailable, and that he challenged any one present to compete with him in the noble art of fencing.

“After the dwarf had for some time amused the multitude in this manner, and found that no one would fight in public a duel with him, he bowed with old French grace, thanked his audience for the favour with which they had received him, and took the freedom to announce to the highly honourable public the most extraordinary exhibition which had ever been admired on English ground. ‘You see this person,’ he cried, as he drew on a dirty kid glove, and led the young girl of the troupe with respectful gallantry to the midst of the ring; ‘this lady is Mademoiselle Laurence, the only daughter of the noble and Christian lady whom you see there with the drum, and who now wears mourning on account of the recent death of her deeply-loved husband, who was the greatest ventriloquist in Europe. Mademoiselle Laurence will now dance! Ladies and gentlemen will please to admire the dance of Mademoiselle Laurence!’ After which he again crowded.

“The young girl did not seem to pay the slightest attention to this speech, nor to the gaze of those around. As if lost in troubled thought she waited till the dwarf had spread a carpet before her and began to play his triangle in

accompaniment with the great drum. It was strange music, a mixture of awkward ill-temper and voluptuous tickling, and I noted in it a pathetic, fantastic, mournfully bold and bizarre melody, which was, however, of the strangest simplicity. But I forgot the music as soon as the young girl began to dance.

“Both dancer and dance attracted my whole attention. It was not the classic dancing such as we still see in great ballets, where, as in classic tragedy, only sprawling unities and artificial effects flourish. It was not those footed Alexandrines, those declamatory leaps, those anti-thetic *entrechats*, that noble passion which whirls in pirouettes so distractingly down on one foot that one sees nothing but heaven and *stockinette*—nothing but ideality and lies! There is really nothing so repulsive to me as the ballet in the great opera in Paris, where the traditions of ‘classic’ dancing have been most perfectly preserved, while the French have overthrown the classic system in all other arts, poetry, music, and painting. But it will be hard for them to bring about a similar revolution in the art of dancing, unless it be that here, as in their political revolution, they fly to terrorism, and guillotine the legs of the obstinate male and female dancers of the old *régime*.

“Mademoiselle Laurence was no great *danseuse*,



her toes were not very supple, her legs were not practised in all possible contortions; she understood nothing of the art of dancing as Vestris teaches it, but she danced as Nature teaches; her whole soul was in time with her steps; not only did her feet dance, but her whole form and face. She often became pale, almost deadly pale; her eyes opened spectrally wide, yearning and pain convulsed her lips, while her black hair, which in smooth ovals inclosed her temples, moved like two flapping ravens' wings. It was indeed no classic dance, but neither was it romantic in the sense in which a young Frenchman of the school of Eugene Renduel would explain the word. It had neither anything Mediæval nor Venetian, nor distorted and deformed, nor Macabre—there was in it neither moonshine nor incest. It was a dance which did not attempt to amuse by outward phases of motion, but by phases which seemed to be words of a strange language which would say strange things. But what did the dance say? I could not understand it, however passionately it pleaded. I only felt that here and there something terribly, shudderingly painful was meant. I who in other things grasp so readily the key of a mystery, could not solve this danced enigma, and that I sought in vain to find the sense was the fault of the music, which certainly sought to lead me astray, which cunningly

tried to bewilder me and set me wrong. The triangle of Monsieur Turlutu tittered many a time mockingly, while Madame the mother beat so angrily on her great drum that her face beamed out of the cloud of black hood round her face like a blood-red Northern light.

“Long after the troupe had departed, I remained standing in the same place wondering what this dance could mean. Was it some national dance of the South of France or of Spain? These were recalled by the irrepressible energy with which the dancer threw her body to and fro, and the wildness with which she often threw her head backwards in the mad manner of the bold Bacchantæ whom we see with amazement on the reliefs of antique vases. Her dance had in it something of intoxicated unwillfulness, something gloomily inevitable or fatalistic, for she danced like destiny itself. Or was it a fragment of some primævally ancient, forgotten pantomime? Or a secret tale of life, set to motion? Very often the girl bent to the earth, with listening ear, as if she heard a voice calling up to her. Then she trembled like an aspen leaf, sprang quickly to the other side, and there indulged in her maddest gambols. Then she inclined her ear again to the earth, listened more anxiously than before, nodded with her head, grew sad and pale, shuddered, stood awhile

straight as a taper, as if frozen, and finally made a motion *as if washing her hands!* Was it blood which she so carefully, with such terrible anxiety, washed away? While doing this she cast to one side a glance so pitifully imploring, so soul-melting—and this glance fell by chance on me.<sup>1</sup>

“I thought all night long on this glance, on the dance, on the wild accompaniment, and as I, on the morrow, roamed as usual about the streets, I felt a deep longing to meet the beautiful dancer again, and I pricked up my ears to perceive if I could the sound of drum and triangle music. I had at last found in London something which interested me, and I no longer wandered aimlessly about in its gaping streets.

“I had just quitted the Tower, where I had carefully looked at the axe with which Anne Bullen was beheaded, the diamonds of the British crown, and the lions, when I beheld again Madame the mother with the great drum, and heard Monsieur Turlutu crowing like a cock. The learned dog again raked together the heroism of Lord Wellington, the dwarf displayed his in-

<sup>1</sup> Making due allowance for the manner of description, and the hand-washing fragment borrowed from the ballet of Macbeth, it would appear that Heine had seen somewhere a dance by some Hungarian or Russian gypsy girl, without knowing what it meant. The listening to the speech of the *Pchurus* or earth-spirit proves this.

vincible carte and tierce, and Mademoiselle Laurence began once more her wonderful dance. And there were again the same enigmatical movements, the same language speaking what I could not understand, the same impetuous casting back of the beautiful head, the same listening at the ground, the terror which relieved itself by mad leaps, again the listening to the voice below, the trembling, the growing pale, the frozen silence, the frightfully mysterious washing of hands, and at last the side glance, imploring and beseeching, which she cast at me, lasting this time longer than before.

“Yes, women, girls as well as matrons, know at once when they have attracted the attention of a man. Although Mademoiselle Laurence, when not performing, always stood motionless and sad, and while she danced hardly looked at the public, from this time it was no longer by chance that her glance ever fell on me, and the oftener I saw her dance the more significantly she looked, but still more incomprehensible was her expression. I was as if bewitched by this glance, and for three weeks from morning till evening did I walk the streets of London, stopping wherever Mademoiselle Laurence danced. In spite of the great noise of the multitude I could catch at the greatest distance the sound of the drum and triangle, and Monsieur Turlutu

as soon as he saw me coming, raised his most friendly crow. And without ever speaking a word to him or with Mademoiselle Laurence, with Madame Mère, or with the learned dog, I seemed in the end to belong entirely to the troupe. When Monsieur Turlutu took up his collections, he always behaved with the most refined tact, as soon as he drew near me, and always looked away when I threw into the three-cornered hat a small coin. He had really an aristocratic manner; he recalled the exquisite politeness of the past. One could see in the little man that he had grown up among monarchs, and so much the stranger did it seem and quite below his dignity when he crowed like a cock.

“I cannot tell you how sad I felt when for three days I sought in vain for the little troupe in all the streets, and at last was certain they had left London. The blue devils held me once more in their leaden arms, and squeezed my heart together. At last I could endure it no longer, and bade adieu to the mob, the blackguards, the gentlemen, and the fashionables of England—the Four Estates of the realm—and travelled back to the civilised world, where I knelt down, devoutly praying, before the white apron of the first cook whom I met. For here I could once more dine like an intelligent human being, and refresh my soul by the contemplation of



unselfish faces. But I could never forget Mademoiselle Laurence. She danced a long time in my memory, and in idle hours I often reflected on the enigmatic pantomime of the beautiful child, especially on the listening at the earth with inclined ear. It was long ere the uncanny triangle and drum melody faded away from my mind.

“And that is the whole story?” cried Maria, as she rose passionately excited.

But Maximilian gently pressed her back, laid his forefinger significantly on his mouth, and whispered, “Still—be still—speak not a word. Be good and calm, and I will tell you the tail of the story; but, for life, do not interrupt me!”

Then as he lolled back somewhat more comfortably in his chair, he thus continued:—

“Five years after all this I came for the first time to Paris, and that at a very remarkable time. The French had put their Revolution of July on the stage, and the whole world applauded. This drama was not so terrible as the previous tragedies of the Republic and the Empire. Only a few thousand corpses remained on the show-ground, with which the political romanticists were not very well satisfied, and they announced a new piece in which more blood was to flow, and the executioner be much busier.

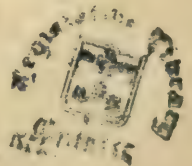
“Paris delighted me by the gaiety which is there manifested in everything, and which sheds its influence even on darkened souls. Strange, Paris is the stage where the greatest tragedies of the world’s history are acted—tragedies of which the memory, even in most distant lands, makes hearts tremble and eyes weep—but to him who sees them here in Paris itself, it is as it once was with me when I saw the Tour de Nesle played at the Porte Saint Martin. For I was seated behind a lady who wore a hat of rose-red gauze, and this hat was so broad that it completely covered for me the whole stage-view, so that I only saw all that was being tragedied through the red gauze, and all the horrors of the Tour de Nesle appeared consequently in the gayest *couleur de rose*. Yes, there is such a roselight in Paris, which softens all tragedies for him who is close by, so that his enjoyment of life shall not be diminished. Even the terrors or troubles which one has brought to Paris in his own heart lose their power to torment. There all sufferings are soothed. In the air of Paris all wounds heal more rapidly than elsewhere; there is something in it as grandly elevating, as soothing, as charming as in the people themselves

“What pleased me best in the Paris people was its polite manners and aristocratic mien. Sweet pine-apple perfume of politeness, how beneficently

didst thou refresh my sick and weary soul, which had imbibed in Germany so much tobacco nausea, smell of sauer-kraut, and vulgarity! The delightful and apt excuses of a Frenchman who, on the day of my arrival, had by accident run against me in the street, sounded to me like the melodies of Rossini. I was almost frightened at such sweet politeness, I who was accustomed to German boorish knocks in the ribs without a word of apology. During my first week in Paris I sought intentionally to be run against by people, that I might enjoy this apologetic music. But it is not merely from politeness, but owing to their language itself, the French people have a peculiar coating of eminent refinement. For, as you know, by us in the North the French language is an attribute of the higher nobility, and from childhood the idea of aristocracy was always associated in my mind with French. And so a French market-woman<sup>1</sup> spoke better French than a German comtesse of sixty-four quarterings.

“On account of their language, which gives them an aristocratic air, the French people have to me something delightfully romantic in all

<sup>1</sup> *Dame de la Halle*. Women noted for their Paris *patois*, or slang and vulgarity. A comparison recalling the remark of the English or American lady, who, in commenting on the superiority of the Gallic race to all others, remarked that in Paris even the lowest stable-boys wore French boots.



their ways and words. This came from another reminiscence of my childhood. For the first book in which I learned to read French was the Fables of Lafontaine, in which the naively sensible phrases made such an ineffaceable impression on my memory that, when I came to Paris and heard French spoken everywhere, I continually recalled the old stories. It seemed to me that I heard the well-known voices of the animals; now the lion spoke, then the wolf, then the lamb, or the stork, or the dove—ever and anon master fox, and in memory many a time I heard—

‘Eh ! bonjour, Monsieur du Corbeau !  
Que vous êtes joli ! que vous me semblez beau !’

“Such reminiscences of fables awoke in my soul much oftener when I in Paris frequented the higher regions, which men called the world. For this was specially the world which supplied Lafontaine with the types of his animal characters. The winter season began soon after my arrival in Paris, and I took part in the salon life in which that world moves more or less merrily. What struck me as most interesting in this world was not the equality as regards refined politeness which prevails in it, so much as the difference in its elements. Very often, when I in a grand salon looked round on the

people assembled there on the most friendly footing, it seemed as if I were in a curiosity-shop, where the relics of all ages are huddled higgledy-piggledy all together, a Greek Apollo by a Chinese pagoda, a Mexican Vilzliputzli by a Gothic Ecce Homo, Egyptian idols with dogs' heads, holy horrors of wood, ivory, and metal, and so on. There I saw old *mousquetaires* who had once danced with Marie Antoinette, Republicans of mild observance who were regarded as gods in the Assemblée Nationale, Montagnards without money and without reproach, former members of the Directory who had been enthroned in the Luxembourg, bearers of great dignities under the Empire before whom all Europe had trembled, ruling Jesuits of the Restoration—in short, actual faded and mutilated divinities of all eras, in whom no one any longer believed. The names howl on coming into contact, but the men looked peaceably and stood together in peace, like the antiquities of which I have spoken in the bric-à-brac shops of the Quai Voltaire. In Germanic lands, where passions are less amenable to discipline, such a social assemblage of such heterogeneous persons would be simply impossible. Neither is the need of conversation so great with us in the cold North, as in warmer France, where the bitterest enemies, when they meet in a salon,



cannot long maintain a gloomy silence. And the desire to please is there carried so far, that people strive earnestly to be agreeable not only to their friends but even their enemies. Hence a constant disguise and display of graces, so that women have their own time of it to surpass men in their coquetry—but succeed in it all the same.

“I mean indeed nothing wrong by this comparison—and, on my life! nothing in detraction of French women, and least of all the Parisiennes. For I am their greatest adorer, and honour and admire them more for their defects than for their virtues. I know nothing so exquisitely to the point as a legend that the French women came into the world with all possible faults, but that a beneficent fairy took pity, and gave to every fault a magic by which it appeared as a fresh charm. This enchanting fairy is grace. Are all French women beautiful? Who can tell? Who hath seen through all the intrigues of the toilet, into whose heart hath it entered to decipher if that is real which the tulle betrays, or is that false which puffed-out silk parades? And if it be given to the eye to penetrate the shell even as we are intent to examine the kernel, lo it covers itself in a new hull, and yet again in another, and by means of this incessant metamorphosis of modes they mock mankind. Are

their faces beautiful? Even this is hard to determine. For all their features are in constant motion; every Parisienne has a thousand faces, every one more laughing, more *spirituelle*, more charming than the other, and he would be well bewildered who under it all could detect the fairest, or the real face at all. Or are their eyes large? What do I know? We do not long examine the calibre of a cannon when its ball decapitates us. And even if they miss—these eyes—at least they dazzle us by their fire, and he is glad enough who can get out of shot-range. Is the space between the nose and mouth broad or narrow? Very often broad, when they turn up the nose; very often small, when they scornfully curl their upper lips. Is her mouth great or small? Who can tell where the lips leave off and laughing begins? To form a correct judgment, the one judging and the object judged must be in a condition of repose. But who can rest by a Parisienne, and what Parisienne ever rests, herself? There are people who believe they can see a butterfly quite accurately when they have fastened it with a pin on paper, which is as foolish as it is cruel, for a fixed and quiet insect is a butterfly no longer. It must be seen while it flutters among the flowers, and the Parisienne must not be studied in her domestic life, where she is pinned down, but in the salon,

at soirees and balls, where she flies freely with the wings of embroidered gauze and silk among the flashing crystal crowns of delight and gaiety! Then is revealed in her an eager rapture in life, a longing for sweet sensuous oblivion, a yearning for intoxication, by which she is made almost terribly beautiful, and gains a charm which at once enraptures and shocks our soul.

“This thirst to enjoy life, as if in another hour death would snatch them away from the sparkling fountain of enjoyment, or as if this fountain would be in another hour sealed for ever—this haste, this rage, this madness of the Parisiennes, especially as shown in balls, always reminds me of the legend of the dead dancing-girls who are called by us the Willis.<sup>1</sup> These are young brides who died before the wedding-day, but who still have the unsatisfied mania for dancing so deeply in their hearts, that they rise by night from their graves and meet in crowds on the highways, where they at midnight abandon themselves to the wildest dances. In their bridal dresses, with wreaths of flowers on their heads, sparkling rings on their pale white hands, laugh-

<sup>1</sup> Not exactly by “us,” but by the Slavonian races, among whom the *Vila* is a sylvan spirit who assumes many forms. There is a rather old French ballet on this theme called *Les Willis*.

ing fearfully, irresistibly beautiful, the Willis dance in the moonshine, and they dance the more impetuously and wildly the more they feel that the hour allowed them for dancing is drawing to an end, and they must again descend to the icy cold of the grave.

“It was at a soiree in the Chaussée d’Antin where this thought went deep into my soul. It was a brilliant reception, and nothing was wanting in all available ingredients of social enjoyment—enough lights to be seen by, enough mirrors to see one’s self, enough people to squeeze among till one was warm, enough *cau sucré* and ices to cool one. It began with music. Franz Liszt had allowed himself to be forced to the pianoforte, threw his hair up above his genial brow, and played one of his most brilliant battle-pieces. The keys seemed to bleed. If I am not mistaken, he played a passage from the *Palingenesia* of Balianche, whose ideas he translated into music, which was a great advantage for those who do not know the works of this celebrated author in the original. After this he played the March to the Gallows<sup>1</sup>—*la marche au supplice*—that glorious composition of Berlioz which this young artist, if I do not err, composed on the morning of his wedding-day.

“There were in the entire hall faces growing

<sup>1</sup> *Der Gang nach der Hinrichtung.*

pale, heaving bosoms, panting breaths during the pauses, and at last roaring applause. Women always seem intoxicated when Liszt plays. With wild joy these Willis of the salon threw themselves into the dance, and I had trouble to escape from the crowd into a side-room. Here play was going on, and a few ladies, reclining on great easy-chairs, took, or feigned to take, an interest in the game. As I passed by one of these dames, and her dress touched my arm, I felt a thrill pass from my hand to my shoulder like a slight electric shock. And such a shock, but with full strength, shook my heart when I saw the lady's countenance. Was it *she*—or not? There was the same countenance which in form and sunny hue was like an antique; only it was not so marbly-pure and marble smooth as before. A closely observant eye could detect on brow and cheeks faint traces as of small-pox, which exactly resembled the weather-marks which one sees on statues which have been for some time exposed to the rain. There were the same black locks which in smooth ovals covered the temples like raven's wings. But as her eye met mine, and that with the well-known side glance whose quick lightning shot so enigmatically through my soul, I doubted no longer—it was Mademoiselle Laurence.



“Leaning aristocratically, a bouquet in one hand, the other on the chair arm, Mademoiselle Laurence sat near a table, and seemed to give her whole attention to the cards. Her dress of white satin was becoming and graceful, yet quite simple. With the exception of bracelets and a brooch of pearls, she wore no ornaments. A chemisette of lace covered her young bosom almost puritanically to the neck, and in this simplicity and modesty of dress she formed a touching, charming contrast with several older ladies, who, gaily ornamented and flashing diamonds, sat by her, and exposed the ruins of their former glory, the place where Troy once stood, in melancholy wasted nakedness. She still seemed wondrously lovely and charmingly sorrowful, and I felt irresistibly attracted to her, and finally stood behind her chair, burning with impatience to speak to her, but restrained by aggravating scruples of delicacy.

“I had stood a little while behind her when she suddenly plucked a flower from her bouquet, and, without looking around, presented it to me over her shoulder. Strange was its perfume, and it exerted in me a strange enchantment. I felt myself freed from all social formalities; I was as if in a dream, where one acts and speaks and wonders at one’s self, and where our words have a childlike, confiding, and simple character.

Calmly, indifferently, carelessly, as one speaks to an old friend, I inclined over the arm of the chair and softly said in her ear—

“ ‘Mademoiselle Laurence, where is your mother with the drum?’ ”

“ ‘She is dead,’ she replied, in the same calm, indifferent tone.

After a little pause I again bent over the arm of the chair and whispered—

“ ‘Mademoiselle Laurence, where is the learned dog?’ ”

“ ‘He has run away out into the wide world,’ she answered, in the same calm tone.

“ ‘And again after a pause I leaned over the arm of the chair and whispered in her ear—

“ ‘Mademoiselle Laurence, where is Monsieur Turlutu, the dwarf?’ ”

“ ‘He is with the giants on the Boulevard du Temple.’ These words were just uttered—in the same easy, indifferent tone—when a serious, elderly man of commanding military appearance approached her, and announced that the carriage was waiting. Slowly rising from her seat she took his arm, and, without casting a look at me, left the company.

“ ‘When I asked our hostess, who had stood during the whole evening at the door presenting her smiles to the coming and parting guests, for the name of the young lady who had just left

with the elderly gentleman, she laughed gaily and said—

“‘*Mon Dieu!* who can know everybody. I know as little who he is as’——

“She silenced suddenly, for she certainly was about to say ‘*You*’—for she saw me that evening for the first time.

“‘Perhaps your husband,’ I suggested, ‘can give me some information. Where shall I look for him?’

“‘Hunting at *St. Germain*,’ replied Madame, with heartier laughter. ‘He left this morning early, and will return to-morrow evening. But—wait—I know some one who has frequently conversed with the lady of whom you speak. I forget his name, but you can easily learn it if you will only inquire for the young gentleman who was kicked by *M. Casimir Perier*—I forget where.’

“Hard as it is to find a man who has been kicked out by a minister, I soon discovered mine, and begged him for some explanation of the marvellous being who so much interested me, and whom I depicted to him distinctly enough.

“‘Yes,’ said the young man; ‘I know her well. I have conversed with her at several soirees.’

“And he repeated a lot of rubbish with which he had entertained the lady. What he had parti-

cularly remarked was her earnest look whenever he had said anything agreeable. And he marvelled not a little that she always declined his invitation to take place in a quadrille, assuring him that she did not know how to dance. He knew nothing of her name or family. Nor could anybody, so far as I could ascertain, give me any closer information in this respect. I ran in vain through all possible soirees seeking for information; I could nowhere find Mademoiselle Laurence."

"And that is the whole story?" cried Maria, as she slowly turned and yawned as if sleepy. "That is your whole remarkable story! And you never saw again either Mademoiselle Laurence, nor the mother with the drum, nor the dwarf Turlutu, nor the learned dog?"

"Lie calm and still," replied Maximilian. "I saw them all again—even the learned dog. But he was in a sad case, the poor rogue, when I met him in Paris. It was in the Latin Quarter. I came by the Sorbonne as a dog rushed from its gate, and after him a dozen students with sticks, who were soon joined by two dozen old women, who all screamed in chorus, 'Mad dog!' The wretched animal looked almost human in his agony of death; tears ran like a stream from his eyes, and as he yelping rushed by me and his dimmed gaze fell on me, I recognised my old friend, the learned

dog, the eulogist of Lord Wellington, who once caused the English people to wonder at his wisdom. Was he really mad, though? Had he overtaxed his intellect with sheer learning while pursuing his studies in the Latin Quarter? Or had he in the Sorbonne offended by his scraping and growling dissent at the puffy-cheeked charlatanery of some professor, who had got rid of his disapproving auditor by declaring that he was mad? Alas! youth does not investigate carefully whether it is irritated pedantry or professional envy<sup>1</sup> which inspires the cry, 'The dog is mad!' but breaks away with thoughtless sticks—and of course all the old women are ready with their yells and howls, and they out-scream the voice of innocence and of reason. My poor friend had to succumb—before my eyes he was pitifully struck dead amid jeers and curses, and at last cast on a dunghill—a wretched martyr to learning!

“Nor was the condition of the dwarf, Monsieur Turlutu, very much better when I re-discovered him on the Boulevard du Temple. Mademoiselle Laurence had indeed said that he had gone thither, but whether I did not seriously attempt to seek him there, or the crowd of people was so great, it happened that some time passed before I observed the show place where

<sup>1</sup> *Brotneid.* Rivalry of bread.



the giants were found. Two tall knaves lay at ease on a bench, who jumped up and assumed the attitude of giants when I appeared. They were really not so large as their sign boasted, but only two overgrown rascals, clad in rose-coloured tricot, who had very black, and perhaps false, side-whiskers, and who swung immense but hollow wooden clubs over their heads. When I asked after the dwarf, who was also set forth on the sign, they replied that for four weeks he had been unable on account of increasing illness to appear in public, but that I might see him if I would pay an extra price of admission. How willingly one pays double to see an old friend! Alas! it was a friend whom I found on his death-bed! This deathbed was really a child's cradle, and in it lay the poor dwarf, with his sallow, wrinkled old man's face. A little girl of perhaps four years sat by him, rocking the cradle with her foot, and singing in a comical babbling tone—

“‘Sleep, Turlututy—sleep!’

“As the little man saw me he opened his glazed blue eyes as wide as possible, and a melancholy smile twitched about his white lips; he seemed to recognise me at once, for he reached out his dried, withered little hand, and gasped softly, ‘Old friend!’

“It was indeed in sad, troublous case that I found the man who, when eight years of age, had had a long conversation with Louis XVI., whom the Czar Alexander had fed with bonbons, whom the Princess of Kyritz had held on her lap, to whom the King of Bavaria had read his poems, who had smoked from the same pipe with German princes, whom the Pope had apotheosised, and whom Napoleon had never loved! This last fact troubled the wretched man even on his deathbed—I should say in his death-cradle—and he wept over the tragic destiny of the great Emperor who had never loved him, but who had ended his life in such lamentable circumstances at St. Helena—‘Even as I now die,’ he added, ‘rejected, neglected by all kings and princes, a mere mockery of former glory.’

“Though I could not quite understand how a dwarf who dies among giants could compare himself with a giant who dies among dwarfs, still the words of poor Turlutu and his neglected state in his dying hour moved me. I could not refrain from expressing my amazement that Mademoiselle Laurence, who had now become so grand, did not trouble herself about him. I had hardly mentioned her name when the dwarf was seized with agonising cramps, and wailed with white lips, ‘Ungrateful child! She whom I brought up, and would have even made my wife, whom I

taught how one should move and conduct one's self among the great people of this world—how one should smile and bow at court and act with elegance—thou hast turned my teaching to good account; now thou art a great lady, and hast a carriage and lackeys, and much money, and no heart! Thou leavest me to die here alone and miserable, like Napoleon at St. Helena. Oh, Napoleon, thou didst never love me!’ What he then said I could not understand. He raised his head, made passes with his hand, as if fencing with some one, and defending himself against some one, it may have been Death. But the scythe of this adversary can be resisted by none, be he Napoleon or a Turlutu, for with him no parade or guard avails! Exhausted, as if overcome, the dwarf let his head sink, gazed at me with an indescribable spectral glare, crowed suddenly like a cock, and died!

“I confess that this death troubled me all the more because the sufferer had given me no more accurate information as to Mademoiselle Laurence. I was not in love with her, nor did I feel any specially great inclination towards her, and yet I was spurred by a mysterious, irresistible desire to seek her everywhere, and if I entered a salon and looked over those present and did not find her familiar face, then I became quite restless and felt impelled to depart.

“Reflecting on this feeling I stood once at midnight in a side entrance of the Grand Opera, waiting wearily for a coach, for it rained hard. But no coach came, or rather coaches only which belonged to other people, who got in gaily enough and departed, until little by little I was left alone.

“‘Well, then, you must ride with *me!*’ said a lady who, closely wrapped in a black mantilla, had also stood waiting by me for some time, and who was now about to enter a carriage. The voice thrilled through my heart; the well-known side-glance exerted once more its charm; and I seemed to be in a dream, when I found myself in a softly-padded warm carriage by Mademoiselle Laurence. We spoke no word to one another, perhaps we could not have understood if we had spoken, since that vehicle rattled with a fearful droning noise through the streets of Paris for a long time, till it at last stopped before a vast gateway.

“Servants in brilliant livery lighted us up the steps through a suite of apartments. A lady’s maid who with sleepy face approached us, stammered with many excuses that the red room was the only one with a fire lighted. As she gave the maid a sign to leave us, Laurence said laughing, ‘Chance or luck has brought you far indeed to-day; my bedroom is the only one which is warmed’——

“In this bedroom, where we were soon alone, blazed a beautiful fire, which was the more agreeable because the apartment was immensely large and high. This great chamber, which might better be called a great hall, had in it something strangely desolate or empty. Its furniture and decoration and architecture bore the impress of an age whose splendour is now so dusty, and whose dignity seems so sober and sad, that its relics awaken a feeling of discomfort, if not a subdued smile. I speak of the time of the Empire, of the days of golden eagles, high-flying plumes, Greek coiffures, the glory of grand drum-majors, military masses, official immortality decreed by the *Moniteur*, Continental coffee made from chicory, bad sugar from beetroot, and princes and dukes manufactured out of nothing at all. Yet it had its charm, this age of pathetic materialism. Talma declaimed, Gros painted, Bigottini danced, Grassini sang, Maury preached, Rovigo had the police, the Emperor read Ossian, and Pauline Borghese had herself modelled as Venus, and stark naked at that, for the room was quite warm, like that in which I found myself with Mademoiselle Laurence.

“We sat by the fire conversing confidentially, and she told me sighing how she was married to a Buonaparte hero, who every evening before



retiring entertained her with the history of his adventures. A few days before his late departure he had given her in full the battle of Jena; but he was in very bad health, and would hardly survive the Russian campaign. When I asked how long it was since her father had departed this life, she laughed, and said she had never known one, and that her so-called mother had never been married.

“‘Not married!’ I cried; ‘why, I myself saw her in London in deep mourning for her husband’s death!’

“‘Oh!’ replied Laurence, ‘she wore mourning all the time for twelve years, to awaken compassion as a poor widow, and also to take in some simpleton who wanted a wife. She hoped that she would sail the sooner under the black flag into the port of matrimony. But death had pity on her, and she perished suddenly by bursting a vein. I never loved her, for she gave me many a beating and little food. I should have starved if Monsieur Turlutu had not many a time given me a piece of bread on the sly; but for that the dwarf wanted me to marry him, and when his hopes were wrecked he allied himself to my mother—I say mother only from habit—and both tormented me cruelly. She was always saying I was a useless creature, and that the dog was worth a thousand times more than I with my

wretched dancing. Then they praised the dog at my expense, fed him with cakes, and threw me the crumbs. "The dog," she said, "was her best support; he pleased the public, which did not take the least interest in me; that the dog must maintain me by his work, and that I lived on the charity and refuse of the dog. Damn the dog!"

"Oh! you need not curse him again," I interrupted the angry beauty. "He is dead; I saw him die"——

"Is the beast done for at last?" cried Laurence, as she sprang up with delight beaming in every feature.

"The dwarf also is dead," I added.

"Monsieur Turlutu?" cried Laurence, also joyfully. But the expression faded from her face gradually, and with a milder, almost melancholy tone, she sighed, "Poor Turlutu!"

"As I did not conceal from her that the dwarf in his dying moments had complained of her bitterly, she burst into passionate protestation that she had the fullest intention and desire to provide for the dwarf in the best manner, and that she had offered him an annual pension if he would live quietly and modestly, anywhere in the country. 'But with his habitual vanity and desire of distinction,' continued Laurence, 'he desired to remain in Paris and dwell in my

hotel, for thus he thought he could through me again resume his former acquaintance in the Faubourg Saint Germain, and his old brilliant place in society. And when I flatly refused this he called me a cursed goblin-ghost, a vampire, and a child of death'——

“Laurence suddenly stopped and shuddering said, as she heaved a sigh from her very heart——

“‘Ah! I wish he had left me lying with my mother in the grave!’

“When I prayed her to explain these mysterious words, a flood of tears burst from her eyes, and trembling and sobbing she confessed that the drummer woman in mourning whom she called ‘mother’ had once told her that a strange rumour current as to her birth was not a mere fable. ‘For in the town where we dwelt,’ continued Laurence, ‘I was always called the Death Child. Old women said I was really the daughter of a Count of that place, who maltreated his wife terribly, and when she died gave her a magnificent funeral. But she was far gone with child, and not really dead. Certain thieves, tempted by the richness of her funeral attire, burst open the tomb and took out the Countess, whom they found in the pangs of parturition. She died while giving birth to Laurence. The thieves laid her body again in the tomb, closed it, and carried the babe to the

receiver of their stolen goods, who was the wife of the great ventriloquist.

“This poor child, who was buried before she was born,<sup>1</sup> was everywhere called the Death-Child. Ah! you cannot know how much misery I had even as a little girl, when people called me by this name. While the great ventriloquist was alive, and when he was discontented with me — as often happened — he always cried: “Cursed Death-Child, I wish I had never taken you from the grave.” As he was of great skill in his calling, he could so modulate his voice as to make any one think that it came from the ground, and so he would make me believe that it was the voice of my dead mother who related her story. He knew the terrible tale well enough, for he had once been a servant of the Count my father. It was his greatest pleasure to torture me with the awful terror which I, a mere infant, felt at hearing this. The words which came in spectral tones from the ground told things so dreadful that I could not alto-

<sup>1</sup> Heine here very oddly, and certainly quite unconsciously, repeats a line from an old English riddle on Eve—

“In the garden there strayed  
A beautiful maid,  
As fair as the flowers of the morn;  
The first hour of her life  
She was made a wife,  
*And was buried before she was born.*”

gether understand them, but all of which, when I danced in after years, came vividly back into my mind.<sup>1</sup> At such a time strange memories seemed to possess me. I forgot myself, and was another person tormented with all terrors and mysteries, but so soon as I ceased to dance all vanished from my mind.'

"While Mademoiselle Laurence spoke, slowly and as if questioning, she stood before me by the fireplace, where the fire gleamed ever more and more agreeably, and I sat in the great arm-chair, which was probably the seat of her husband when he of evenings related his battles before going to bed. Laurence looked at me with her great eyes, as if asking me for counsel, nodding her head in so mournfully reflective a manner that she inspired in me a deep sympathy. She was so delicate, so young, so beautiful, this slender lily sprung from the grave, this daughter of

<sup>1</sup> Should this seem incredible to any reader, I would state that when I was a child not three years old, still suffering terribly from the results of a nervous fever, a very pious old lady was in the habit of frightening me in a manner every whit as cruel as that described by Laurence, and very much like it. Having made me believe that a "bugaboo" lived in a certain closet, she would dress herself up in a horrible fashion, come out of the closet, and approach me growling. I have often wondered that I survived the awful terrors of this discipline, which, by the way, was common enough in nurseries at that time. Heine forgets to mention that such torturing children was usual when the supernatural was in fashion.



death, this ghost with the face of an angel and the body of a bayadere!

"I know not how it happened—perhaps it was the influence of the arm-chair in which I sat; but all at once it seemed to me as if I were the old general who the day before had been narrating the battle of Jena, and must continue my story, so I said—

"After the battle of Jena, within a few weeks, all the Prussian fortresses surrendered almost without a blow. First of these was Magdeburg,<sup>1</sup> the strongest of all, and it had three hundred cannons. Was not that disgraceful?"

"Mademoiselle Laurence let me proceed no further. All melancholy had fled from her beautiful face. She laughed like a child and said, 'Yes; that was disgraceful, and more than disgraceful. If *I* were a fortress, and had three hundred cannon, I would never surrender.'

"But as Mademoiselle Laurence was no fortress, and had no three hundred cannons"——

Here Maximilian suddenly paused, and after a short pause asked softly—

"Maria, are you asleep?"

"Yes, I sleep," replied Maria.

. . . . .

"I would say," added Maximilian, "that I sat by the fire in a red light, and it seemed to me as

<sup>1</sup> Magdeburg means the virgin fortress.—*Translator*,

if I were the god Pluto amid the glowing flames of hell, holding the sleeping Proserpine in his arms. She slept, and I studied her charming face, and sought in its traits some explanation of that sympathy which my soul felt for her. What was the meaning of this woman? What significance lurked under the symbolism of this beautiful form? I held this winsome riddle now as my possession in my arms, yet could not discover its solution.

“ Yet, is it not folly to endeavour to penetrate the inner meaning of a strange appearance or phenomenon when we cannot as much as solve the problems of our own souls? Why, we are not even certain that these outer apparitions really *exist*. Many a time we cannot distinguish reality from faces seen in our dreams. Was it an image of my imagination, or was it a terrible reality, which I that night heard and saw? I do not know. I can only remember that while the wildest thoughts streamed through my heart, a rustling, ringing noise sounded in my ears. It was a crazy melody, singularly slow. It seemed to be very familiar, and at last I recognised in it the sound of a triangle and a drum. This music, tinkling and buzzing, seemed to approach from afar, and at last when I looked up I saw near me, in the centre of the room, a well-known show, for it was Monsieur Turlutu, the

dwarf, who played the triangle, and Madame Mère, who beat the great drum, while the learned dog scratched round on the ground as if seeking for his wooden letters. The dog seemed to move with pain, and his hair was spotted with blood. Madame Mère still wore her black mourning, but she had no longer her old plump, comical figure, and her face was not now red but pale. The dwarf, who still wore the embroidered coat of an old French marquis, with a powdered wig, seemed to be somewhat taller, probably because he had become so fearfully thin. He displayed as before his skill in fencing, and seemed to be wheezing out his old boasts, but spoke so softly that I could not catch a word, and it was only by the movements of his lips that I could often observe that he was crowing like a cock.

“While these laughably horrible distorted images moved before my eyes with unseemingly haste, I perceived that Laurence breathed more restlessly. A cold shudder ran like frost through all her body, and her beautiful limbs twitched convulsively, as if with intolerable pain. But at last, supple as an eel, she slid and slipped from my arms, stood in a second in the centre of the room, and began to dance, while the mother with the drum and the dwarf with the triangle again raised their softly muffled music. She danced as she had done on the Waterloo

Bridge and on the crossings of London. There was the same mysterious pantomime, the same passionate leaps, the same Bacchic casting back of the head, many times the same bending down to the earth, as if listening to what was being said below, then the old trembling, the growing pale, the frozen stillness, and yet again the listening with the ear inclined. And she also rubbed her hands as if washing them. At last she seemed to again cast her deep, painful, imploring glance at me, but it was only in the features of her deathly pale face that I recognised the glance, not in her eyes, for they were closed. The music sounded ever softer, the drum-mother and the dwarf growing paler, dimmer, and whirling away like mist, at last disappeared altogether, but Laurence remained as before, dancing with closed eyes. This dancing, as if blind, in the silent room by night, gave the beautiful creature such a ghostly air that I often shuddered, and was heartily glad when she ceased to dance, and glided and slipped, as softly as she had flown away, back into my arms.

“Certainly the sight of this scene was not agreeable. But man accustoms himself to everything, and it is possible that the unearthly mystery of this woman gave her a peculiar charm, which mingled with my feelings a terrible tenderness—enough that in a few weeks I was no

longer amazed in the least when by night I heard the ring of the drum and triangle, and my dear Laurence suddenly leaped up and danced a solo with closed eyes. Her husband, the old Buonapartist, commanded near Paris, and his duties allowed him to pass only his days in the city. As a matter of course he became my most intimate friend, and he wept bright tears when the day came for him to bid me for a long time adieu. He travelled with his wife to Sicily, and I have never seen either of them since."

As Maximilian finished this story he quickly took his hat and slipped out of the room.



FROM THE MEMOIRS OF HERR VON  
SCHNABELEWOPSKI.



*CHAPTER I.*

MY father was named Schnabelewopski, my mother Schnabelewopska. I was born as legitimate son of both, the 1st of April 1795, in Schnabelewops. My great aunt, the old lady von Pipitzka, nursed me as a child, and told me pretty tales, and often sang me to sleep with a song of which I have forgotten both the words and tune; but I can never forget the strange, mysterious way in which she nodded as she sang, and how mournfully her only tooth, the solitary hermit of her mouth, peeped out. And I can remember, too, much about the parrot, whose death she so bitterly bewailed. My old great aunt is dead now herself, and I am the only one in the world who still thinks of her parrot. Our cat was called Mimi, and our dog Joli. He had a great knowledge of human

nature, and always got out of the way when I took down my whip. One morning our servant said that the dog kept his tail rather close between his legs and let his tongue hang out much more than usual, for which reason poor Joli was thrown, with some stones which were tied to his neck, into the water; on which occasion he was drowned. Our footman was called *Prrschtz-zwitsch*. To pronounce this name properly one must sneeze at the same time. Our maid was called *Swurtszaska*, which indeed sounds rather roughly in German, but which is musical to the last degree in Polish. She was a stout, low-built person, with white hair and blonde teeth. Besides these there was a pair of beautiful black eyes running about the house, which were called *Seraphina*. This was my beautiful, beloved cousin, and we played together in the garden, and watched the housekeeping of the ants, and caught butterflies and planted flowers. She laughed once like mad when I planted my little stockings in the earth, believing that they would grow up into a great pair of breeches for papa.

My father was the best soul in the world, and was long regarded as a very handsome man. He wore powdered hair, and behind a neatly braided little queue, which did not hang down, but was fastened with a little tortoise-shell comb to one side. His hands were of a dazzling whiteness,

and I often kissed them. It seems as if I could still smell their sweet perfume, which made my eyes tingle. I loved my father dearly, and it never came into my mind that he could ever die.

My paternal grandfather was the old Herr von Schnabelewopski, and all I know of him is that he was a man, and my father was his son. My maternal grandfather was the old Herr von Wlrssrnski (sneeze again to pronounce this name correctly), and he is painted in a scarlet velvet coat, with a long sword, and my mother often told me that *he* had a friend who wore a green silk coat, rose-silk breeches, and white silk stockings, who swung his little chapeau-bas here and there in a rage when he spoke of the King of Prussia.

My mother, Lady von Schnabelewopska, gave me as I grew up a good education. She had read much: before my birth she read Plutarch almost exclusively, and was probably deeply impressed by one of his great men, perhaps one of the Gracchi. Hence my mystical yearning to realise the agrarian law in a modern form. My deep sympathy for freedom and equality is probably due to these maternal pre-lectures. Had she read the life of Cartouche I had possibly become a great banker.<sup>1</sup> How often as a boy did

<sup>1</sup> Cartouche. A famous French thief whose life has long been a popular chap-book.

I play truant from school to reflect on the beautiful meadows of Schnabelewopska how to benefit all mankind. For this I was often well scolded and punished as an idler, and so had to suffer with grief and pain for my schemes for benefiting the world. The neighbourhood of Schnabelewops is, I may mention, very beautiful. There is a little river running there in which one can bathe in the summer-time very agreeably, and there are the most delightful birds' nests in the copses along the banks. Old Gnesen, the former capital of Poland, is only three miles distant. There, in the cathedral, Saint Adalbert is buried. There is his silver sarcophagus, on which lies his very image, the size of life, with bishop's mitre and crosier, the hands piously folded—and all of molten silver! How often have I thought of thee, thou silver saint! Ah, how often my thoughts go back to Poland, and I stand once more in the cathedral of Gnesen, leaning on the column by the grave of Adalbert! Then the organ peals once more, as if the organist were trying a piece from Allegri's Miserere; a mass is being murmured in a distant chapel, the last rays of the sun shine through the many-coloured glass windows, the church is empty, only there lies before the silver shrine a praying figure—a woman of wondrous beauty—who casts at me a sudden side glance, which she turns as suddenly

again towards the saint, and murmurs with yearning, cunning lips, "I pray to *thee!*"

In the instant in which I heard those words, the sacristan rang his bell in the distance, the organ pealed as with extreme haste like a rising tide, the beautiful woman rose from the steps of the altar, cast her veil over her blushing face, and left the cathedral.

"I pray to thee!" Were these words addressed to me or to the silver Adalbert? Truly she had turned to him, but only her face. What was the meaning of that side-glance which she first threw at *me*, whose rays flashed over my soul like a long ray of light which the moon pours over a midnight sea when it breaks from a dark cloud, and in an instant is seen no more? In my soul, which was dark as such a sea, that gleam of light woke all the wild forms which lurk in the abyss, and the maddest sharks and sword-fish of passion darted upward and tumbled together, and bit one another in the tails for ecstasy, and over it all the organ roared and stormed more terribly, like a great tempest on the Northern Sea.

The next day I left Poland.

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## CHAPTER II.

My mother packed my trunk herself. With every shirt she put in a bit of moral advice. In after times the washerwomen got away with all my shirts, and morals too. My father was deeply moved, and gave me a long slip of paper, on which he had written out, precept by precept, how I was to behave in the world. The first article announced that I was to turn every ducat ten times before I spent it. I followed this advice at first; after a while the constant turning became tiresome. With every item of advice I received a ducat. Then he took scissors, cut the queue from his dear head, and gave it to me for a souvenir. I have it yet, and never fail to weep when I see the powdered delicate hair.

The night before I left I had the following dream:—

I wandered alone in a cheerful, beautiful place by the sea-side. It was noon, and the sun shone on the water, which sparkled like diamonds. Here and there on the beach grew a great aloe, which lifted its green arms, as if imploring, to the sunny heaven. There stood a weeping willow with its long hanging tresses, which rose and fell as the waves came playing up, so that

it looked like a young water-spirit letting down her green locks, or raising them to hear the better what the wooing sprites of the air were whispering to her. And, indeed, it often sounded like sighs and tender murmurs. The sea gleamed more beautifully and tenderly, the waves rang more musically, and on the rustling, glittering waves rose the holy Adalbert, as I had seen him in the Gnesen Cathedral, with the silver crosier in his silver hand, the silver mitre on his silver head, and he beckoned to me with his hand, and nodded to me with his head, and at last, as he stood before me, he cried with an unearthly silver voice——

Yes; but I could not hear the words for the rustling of the waves. I believe, however, that my silver rival mocked me, for I stood a long time on the strand, and wept till the twilight came, and heaven and earth became sad and pale, and mournful beyond all measure. Then the flood rose—aloe and willow cracked and were wafted away by the waves, which ran back many times in haste, and came bursting up ever more wildly, rolling and embracing terribly in snow-white half rings. But then I began to perceive a noise in measured time, like the beat of oars, and there came a boat driven along by the waves. In it sat four white forms, with sallow, corpse faces, wrapped in shrcuds, rowing

with energy. In the midst stood a pale but infinitely beautiful woman, infinitely lovely and delicate, as if made from lily-perfume, and she sprang ashore. The boat with its spectral rowmen shot like an arrow back into the rising sea, and in my arms lay Panna Jadviga, who wept and laughed, "I pray to thee!"<sup>1</sup>

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### CHAPTER III.

My first flight after leaving Schnabelewops was towards Germany, and, indeed, to Hamburg, where I remained six months, instead of going directly to Leyden and applying myself, as my parents wished, to the study of theology. I must confess that during that half-year I was much more occupied with worldly than with heavenly affairs.

Hamburg is a good city, all of solid, respectable houses. It is not the infamous Macbeth who governs here, but Banko.<sup>2</sup> The spirit of Banko rules and pervades this little free city, whose

<sup>1</sup> The unexpected ending of this chapter referring to a beautiful woman and death, in a mysterious, uncanny manner, is a *tour de force* which Heine employs several times in the *Reisebilder*.—*Translator*.

<sup>2</sup> Of course Banquo. Pun on bank.

visible head is a high and well-wise Senate.<sup>1</sup> In fact it is a free state, and we find in it the greatest political freedom. The citizens can do what they please, and the high and well-wise Senate acts as it likes. Every one is lord of his own deeds—it is a true republic. If Lafayette had not been so fortunate as to find Louis Philippe he would certainly have recommended the Senate and supervisors of Hamburg to his French fellow-citizens. Hamburg is the best republic. Its manners are English, and its cookery is heavenly.<sup>2</sup> There are, in sober truth, between the Wandrahmen and the Dreckwall, dishes to be found of which our philosophers have no conception. The Hamburgers are good people who enjoy good eating. They are much divided as regards religion, politics, and science, but they are all beautifully agreed as to cooking. Their theologians may quarrel as much as they like over the Lord's Supper,<sup>3</sup> but there is no difference as to the daily dinner. Though there be among the Jews there one division who give grace or the prayer at table in German, while others chant it

<sup>1</sup> *Ein hoch und wohlweiser Senat.* A formal expression often applied officially to such bodies.

<sup>2</sup> *Seine Sitten sind Englisch, und sein Essen ist himmlisch.* *Englisch* has the double meaning of English and angelic. *Non Angli sed Angeli.*

<sup>3</sup> *Abendmahl.* Literally evening or eve-meal; from Pass-over eve.

in Hebrew, they both eat heartily and agree heartily as to what is on the table, and judge its merits with unflinching wisdom. The lawyers, the turnspits of the law, who turn and twist it till at last they get a roast for themselves, may dispute as to whether feeing and pleading shall be publicly conducted or not, but they are all one as to the merits of feeding, and every one of them has his own favourite dish. The army is naturally of Spartan bravery, but it will not hear of black broth. The physicians vary much in treating disorders, and cure the national illness—indigestion—as Brownists, by giving still greater helpings of dried beef; or, as homeopaths, by administering  $\frac{1}{10,000}$ th of a drop of absinthe in a great tureen of mock-turtle soup—but all practise alike when it comes to discussing the soup and the smoked beef themselves. Of this last dish Hamburg is the paternal city, and boasts of it as Mainz boasts of John Faust, or Eisleben of Martin Luther. But what is the art of printing or the Reformation compared to smoked beef! There are two parties in Germany who are at variance as to whether the latter have done good or harm, but the most zealous Jesuits are united in declaring that smoked beef is a good invention, wholesome for humanity.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Rauchfleisch*, i.e., smoked meat, generally or always the same as the beef known in the United States as smoked, or, more



Hamburg was founded by Charles the Great, and is inhabited by eighty thousand small people, none of whom would change with the great man who now lies buried in Aix la Chapelle. The population of the city may amount to one hundred thousand, I am not quite sure, though I walked whole days in its streets to look at the people. It is very possible that many men escaped my attention, as I was particularly occupied with looking at the women. The latter I found were by no means lean; on the contrary, they were generally corpulent, and now and then charmingly beautiful—on the whole, of a flourishing, sensuous quality, which, by Venus! did not displease me. If they do not manifest much wild and dreamy idealism in romantic love, and have little conception of the grand passion of the heart, it is not so much their fault as that of Cupid, who often aims at them his sharpest arrows, but from mischief or unskilfulness shoots too low, and instead of the heart hits them in the stomach. As for the men, I saw among them mostly short figures, calmly reasoning cold glances, low foreheads, carelessly heavy hanging red cheeks, the eating apparatus being remarkably well developed, the hat as if nailed to the head, and the hands in both breeches' pockets, as though their

commonly, dried beef; in Cuba as *tasajo*; in Mexico, *charqui*. It is also a standing dish at all suppers in Holland.

owner would say, "How much must I pay, then?"

Among the lions of Hamburg we find—

1. The old Council House, or Town Hall, where the great Hamburg bankers are chiselled out of stone, and stand counterfeited with sceptres and globes of empire in their hands.

2. The Exchange, where the sons of Hammonia assemble every day, as did the Romans of old in the Forum, and where there hangs overhead a black tablet of honour, with the names of distinguished fellow-citizens.<sup>1</sup>

3. The Beautiful Marianne, an extremely handsome woman, on whom the tooth of Time has gnawed for twenty years. By the way, "tooth of time" is a bad metaphor, for Time is so old that by this time he cannot have a tooth left, while Marianne has all of hers, and hair on them at that.

4. That which was once the Central Treasury.

5. Altona.

6. The original manuscripts of Marr's Tragedies.

7. The owner of the Röding Museum.

8. The Borsenhalle or Stock Exchange.

<sup>1</sup> A satirical reference to a black-board hung in the Exchange, bearing the names of fraudulent or absconding members of the association.

9. The Bacchus Hall.

10. And, finally, the City Theatre.

This last deserves to be specially praised. Its members are all good citizens, honourable fathers of families, who never let themselves be substituted or disguised,<sup>1</sup> and never act so as to deceive anybody for an instant—men who make of the theatre a church, since they convince the unhappy man who has lost faith in humanity, in the most actual manner possible, that all things in this world are not delusion and a counterfeit.<sup>2</sup> In enumerating the remarkable things in Hamburg, I cannot refrain from mentioning that in my time the Hall of Apollo, on the Drehbahn, was a very brilliant place. Now it has very much come down, and philharmonic concerts, and shows by professors of legerdemain, are there given, and professors of natural history are fed. Once it was different. The trumpets pealed, the drums rattled and rolled loudly, ostrich feathers fluttered, and Heloise and Minka ran the races of the Oginski polonaise, and everything was so perfectly respectable! Sweet time it was for me when fortune smiled. And this *fortune* was called Heloise. She was a charming, loving, pleasure-giving treasure, with

<sup>1</sup> *Verstellen*. To misplace, sham, disguise.

<sup>2</sup> By all this Heine simply means that nobody is "taken in" by the acting in question.

rosy lips, a little lily nose, warm, perfumed carnation lips, and eyes like blue mountain lakes, albeit there was something of stupidity on her brow, which hung there like a gloomy cloud over a brilliant spring landscape. She was slender as a poplar, lively as a dove, with a skin delicate as an infant's. Sweet time when Fortune ever smiled on me! Minka did not laugh so much, not having such beautiful teeth; but her tears were all the lovelier when she wept, which she did on all occasions for suffering humanity; and she was benevolent beyond belief. She gave the poor her last penny—yes, for charity's sake, I have known her to be reduced to the last shift. She was so good that she refused nothing to anybody, save that which was indeed beyond her gift. This soft and yielding character contrasted charmingly with her personal appearance, which was that of a brave Juno—a bold, white neck, shaded by wild black ringlets, like voluptuous snakes; eyes which flashed forth as if ruling the world from under glooming arches of victory; purple, proud, high-curving lips; marble white commanding hands, somewhat freckled; and she had on her right side a mother-mark in the form of a small dagger.

If I have brought you into so-called bad company, dear reader, console yourself with the reflection that it does not cost you so much as it

did me. However, there will be no want, further on in this book, of ideal women—and just here I will give you a specimen, just to cheer you up, of two highly decent dames, whom I learned in those days to know and honour. These were Mrs. Pieper and Mrs. Schnieper. The first was a handsome woman in full maturity, with great blackish eyes, a great white forehead, false black hair, a bold, old Roman nose, and a mouth which was a guillotine for every good name. Indeed there could be no contrivance equal to that mouth for the speedy execution and death of a reputation. There was no prolonged struggle, no long-delayed preparation, if the best of characters once got between her teeth she smiled, but that smile was the fall of the axe, and honour was decapitated and the head rolled into the bag. She was always a pattern of propriety, honour, piety, and virtue. The same may be said in celebration of Mrs. Schnieper. She was a tender woman, with a little anxious bosom, generally curtained with a mournful thin gauze or crape, light blonde hair, and clear blue eyes, which gleamed in a frightfully crafty manner out of her white face. People said you could never hear her footfall, and indeed ere you knew it she often stood close by, and then vanished as silently as she came. Her smile, too, was death to any decent reputation.



but less like the fall of an axe than the poison wind of Africa, before whose breath all flowers perish; so in the breath of this woman's voice every good name perished miserably as she smiled. Also a pattern of piety, propriety, honour, and virtue.

I shall not fail to exalt many of the sons of Hammonia, nor to praise in the highest certain men who are grandly esteemed—*videlicet*, those who are rated at several million marks *banco*—but just at present I will subdue my enthusiasm, that it may after a time flame up all the higher. For I have nothing less in my mind than to raise a temple of honour to Hamburg, according to the same plan which was sketched out some ten years ago by a celebrated man of letters, who with this intention requested every Hamburger to send him a specified inventory of his virtues and talents—with one dollar, specie—as soon as possible. I have never exactly understood why this temple of honour never appeared.<sup>1</sup> Some

<sup>1</sup> This kind of miserable swindle is still common in the United States. I have more than once received letters from unknown men, who informed me that they were preparing a volume of Sketches, or Lives of Distinguished Americans, asking me to send a memoir of myself, and especially my photograph, and fifty dollars to pay for engraving it. An examination of the list of those who were to appear in the work convinced me that "a distinguished American" meant any man living who was possessed of fifty dollars, and was willing to pay it to the publisher.—*Translator*.

say that the undertaker, or the man of honour who kept the temple, had hardly printed from A—*Aaaron to Abendroth*—and only got in his first quoins, before he broke down under the weight of copy or biography sent in; others say that the high and well-wise Senate, moved by excess of modesty, prevented the project altogether, since they requested this architect of his own temple of honour to be out of Hamburg with all his virtues within four-and-twenty hours. Anyhow, from some cause or other, the work was never completed; and as I have an inborn yearning to do something great in this world, and have ever striven after the impossible, therefore I have revived this vast project, and will myself manufacture a great temple of honour to Hamburg, an immortal and colossal *book*, in which I will describe without exception all its inhabitants—wherein shall appear noble traits of secret charity which were never mentioned in a newspaper, traits of such grandeur that nobody will believe a word of them, to be preceded by a magnificent portrait of myself, as I appear when I sit in the Jungfernstieg before the Swiss Pavilion, and muse over the magnificence of Hamburg. This will be the vignette of my immortal work.

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## CHAPTER IV.

FOR readers who do not know Hamburg—there are such, I suppose, in China or Upper Bavaria—I must remark that the most beautiful promenade of the sons and daughters of Hammonia bears the appropriate name of Jungfernstieg,<sup>1</sup> and that it consists of an avenue of lime-trees, which is bounded on one side by a row of houses, and on the other by the Alster Basin, and that before the latter, and built out into the water, are two tent-like pleasant cafés, called pavilions. It is nice to sit, especially before one called the Swiss Pavilion, of a summer day, when the afternoon sun is not too hot, but only smiles gaily and pours its rays as in a fairy dream over the lindens, the houses, the people, the Alster, and the swans, who cradle themselves in it. Yes, it is nice to sit there; and even so I sat on many a summer afternoon and thought, as a young man generally does, that is to say, about nothing at all, and looked at what a young man generally looks at, that is, the girls—yes, there they fluttered along, the charming things, with their winged caps, and covered baskets, containing nothing; there they tripped, the gay Vierlander maids, who provide all

<sup>1</sup> *Jungfernstieg*. The Maidens' or Virgins' Walk.

Hamburg with strawberries and their own milk, and whose petticoats are still much too long; there swept proudly along the beautiful merchants' daughters, with whose love one gets just so much ready money; there skipped a nurse bearing on her arm a rosy boy, whom she constantly kissed while thinking of her lover; there wandered too the priestesses of Venus Aphrodite, Hanseatic vestals, Dianas on the hunt, Naiads, Dryads, Hamydryads, and similar clergymen's daughters; and ah! there with them Minka and Heloise! How oft I sat in that pavilion fair and saw her wandering past in rose-striped gown—it cost four shillings and threepence a yard, and Mr. Seligmann gave me his word that even though washed, and that full many times, the colour would not fade. “What glorious girls!” exclaimed the virtuous youths who sat by me. I remember how a great insurance agent, who was always bedecked like a carnival ox, said, “I'd like to have one of them for breakfast, and the other for supper, just at will, and I don't think I should want any dinner that day.” “She is an angel!” cried a sea-captain, so loudly that both the damsels at a glance looked jealously at one another. I myself said nothing, and thought my sweetest nothings, and looked at the girls and the pleasant gentle sky, and the tall Petri tower with its slender waist, and the calm blue Alster,

on which the swans swam so proud, and beautiful, and secure. The swans! I could look at them for hours—the lovely creatures, with their soft, long necks, as they so voluptuously cradled themselves on the soft flood, diving ever and anon, and proudly splashing till the heaven grew dark and the golden stars came forth yearning, hope-giving, wondrously and beautifully tender and transformed. The stars! Are they golden flowers on the bridal bosom of heaven? Are they the eyes of enamoured angels, who with yearning mirror themselves in the blue streams of earth below and rival with the swans?

Ah! that is all long, long ago. Then I was young and foolish. Now I am old and foolish. Many a flower has withered since that time, and many too been trodden into earth; even the rose-striped stuff of Seligmann has lost the colour warranted to wash. He has faded himself; the firm is now Seligmann's late widow.<sup>1</sup> And Heloise, the gentle creature who seemed to be made to walk only on soft Indian flowered carpets and be fanned with peacock's feathers, went down among roaring sailors, punch, tobacco-smoke, and bad music. When I again saw Minka she had changed her name to Katinka, and dwelt between Hamburg and Altona; she

<sup>1</sup> *Seligmann's selige Wittwe.* Seligmann, "happy man," means also a deceased husband. Also a common Jewish name.



looked like the temple of Solomon after it had been destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, and smelt of Assyrian Kanaster; and as she told of Heloise's death, she wept bitterly and tore her hair in despair, and fainted quite away; nor did she recover till she had swallowed a great glass of spirits.

And how the town itself was changed! And the Jungfernstieg! Snow lay on the roofs, and it seemed as if the houses had grown old and had white hair. The lime trees of the Jungfernstieg were dead trees and dry boughs, which waved ghost-like in the cold wind. The sky was cutting blue, and soon grew dark. It was five o'clock on Sunday—the general hour for foddering—and the carriages rolled along. Gentlemen and ladies descended from them with frozen smiles upon their hungry lips. How horrible! At that instant I was thrilled with the awful thought that an unfathomable idiocy appeared in all these faces, and that all persons who passed by seemed bewildered in a strange delirium. Twelve years before, at the same hour, I had seen them with the same faces, like the puppets of a town-hall clock, with the same gestures; and since then they had gone on in the same old way, reckoning and going on 'Change and assisting one another, and moving their jawbones, and paying their *pourboires*, and counting up again: twice two is four. Horrible! I cried. Suppose that

it should suddenly occur to one of these people while he sat on the office stool *that twice two is five!* and that he consequently has been multiplying wrongly all his life, and so wasted that life in an awful error. All at once a foolish delirium seized me, and, as I regarded the passers-by more nearly, it seemed to me as if they were themselves nothing but ciphers or Arabic numerals. There went a crook-footed Two by a fatal Three, his full-bosomed, enceinte spouse; behind them came Mr. Four on crutches, waddling along came a fatal Five, then with round belly and a little hood a well-known little Six, and the still better known Evil Seven; but as I looked more closely at the wretched Eight as it tottered past I recognised in it the insurance agent who once went adorned like a carnival ox, but who now looked like the leanest of Pharoah's lean kine—pale, hollow cheeks, like an empty soup-plate; a cold, red nose, like a winter rose; a shabby black coat, which had a pitiful white shine; a hat into which Saturn with the scythe had cut air-holes; but his boots polished like looking-glasses, and he no longer seemed to think about devouring Heloise and Minka for breakfast and supper, but to be longing very much more for a good dinner of common beef. And I recognised many an old friend among the mere ciphers who rolled along.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This conceit of representing a procession of human beings as numerals had been previously more fully worked out, if I am

So these and the rest of the numerical folk drove by hurried and hungry, while more grimly droll a funeral passed not far off, past the houses of the Jungfernstieg. As a melancholy, masquerading show there walked on after the hearse, stilted on their little, thin, black silk legs, the well-known council-servants, the privileged civic mourners, in a parodied old Burgundian costume, short black cloaks and black plumped breeches, white wigs, and cravats, out of which the red mercenary faces stared comically, short steel rapiers on their hips, with green umbrellas on their arms.

But more uncanny and bewildering than these figures which went silently by were the sounds which rang in my ears from the other side. They were shrill, harsh, creaking, metallic tones, a crazy screeching, a painful splashing and despairing gulping, a gasping and tumbling, and groaning and wailing bitterly—an indescribable ice-cold cry of pain. The basin of the Alster was frozen up, only that near the shore was a large square cut in the ice, and the terrible tones which I had heard came from the windpipes of the poor white creatures which swam round in it, and screeched in horrible agony; and oh, they were the same swans who once had cheered my heart so softly and merrily. Ah! the beautiful white

not mistaken, in *Gackel und Gackeleia*, whose author had probably taken it from a common grotesque design.—*Translator.*

swans! Their wings had been broken to prevent them from flying in the autumn to the warm South, and now the North held them fast bound, fast banned in its dark, icy grave, and the waiter of the Pavilion said they were all right, in there, and that the cold was good for them. But it was not true; it is not good for anybody to be imprisoned, powerless, in a cold pool almost frozen, with the wings broken so that one cannot fly away to the beautiful South, with its beautiful flowers, golden sunlight, and blue mountain lakes. Ah! with me it was little better, and I understood the suffering of these poor swans, and as it ever grew darker and the stars came out bright above, the same stars who once so warm with love wooed the swans on fair summer nights, but who now looked down with frosty brilliancy, and almost scornfully, on them. Ah! I now perceive that the stars are no living, sympathetic beings, but only gleaming phantasms of night, eternal delusions in a dreamed heaven—mere golden lies in dark blue Nothingness.

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## CHAPTER V.

WHILE writing the foregoing chapter I was thinking all the time on something else. An old song was humming in my memory, and forms

and thoughts confused themselves most intolerably, and, willy nilly, I must speak of it. Perhaps it really belongs here, and is right in forcing itself into my scribbling. Ah, yes! now I begin to understand it, and also to understand the mysterious tone in which Klas Hinrichson sang it. He was a Jutlander, and served as our groom. He sang it the very evening before he hung himself in our stable. At the refrain—

Sir Vonved, look about thee!

he often laughed bitterly, the horses neighed in alarm, and the great dog in the courtyard howled as though some one were dying. It is the old Danish song of Sir Vonved, who rides out into the world, and adventures about till all his riddles are answered, and he in vexed mood returns home. The harp sings in it as refrain from beginning to end. But what did he sing first and last? I have often thought thereon. Klas Hinrichson's voice was many a time subdued by tears when he began the ballad, and then became gradually as rough and growling as the sea when a storm is rising. It begins:

Sir Vonved sits in his room away,  
Well on his gold harp he can play;  
He hides the gold harp beneath his cloak,  
His mother entered, and thus she spoke:  
"Sir Vonved, look about thee!"



That was his mother Adeline the Queen. She said to him, "My young son, let others play the harp. Gird on thy sword, mount thy horse, try thy courage, strive and strain, see the world ere thou turn again! Sir Vonved, look about thee!"

Sir Vonved binds his sword to his side,  
To battle with warriors he will ride;  
Strange was his journey and intent,  
For no man knew the way he went.  
Sir Vonved, look about thee!

His helmet was blinking,  
His spurs were clinking,  
His horse was springing,  
In saddle bow swinging!  
Sir Vonved, look about thee!<sup>1</sup>

He rode one day and then days three,  
Yet never a city could he see.  
"Ha!" said the youth, "on either hand,  
Is there no city in this land?"  
Sir Vonved, look about thee!

And as he went the road along,  
There came to him Sir Thūle Vāng,  
Sir Thūle Vāng, with many a son;  
They were good warriors every one.  
Sir Vonved, look about thee!

"My youngest son, hear what I say!  
Our armour we must change to-day;  
My harness must be worn by thee,  
Before we fight this hero free."  
Sir Vonved, look about thee!

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<sup>1</sup> The metre changes in this verse as in the Danish original.

Sir Vonved draws his sword from his side,  
 Against the warriors he will ride ;  
 Lord Thüle first of all he slew,  
 Then all of his twelve sons thereto.  
     Sir Vonved, look about thee !

Sir Vonved binds his sword to his side, and  
 rides on. Then he meets a hunter, and will  
 have half his game. But the man refuses, and  
 must fight, and is slain.<sup>1</sup> And

Sir Vonved binds his sword to his side,  
 And onward ever he will ride ;  
 O'er mountain high, and river deep,  
 To where a shepherd guards his sheep.  
     Sir Vonved, look about thee !

And to the herd as he drew near,  
 Said, " Whose the flock thou drivest here ?  
 And what is rounder than a wheel ?  
 And where is the merriest Christmas meal ?"  
     Sir Vonved, look about thee !

" Say where the fish rests in the flood ?  
 And where is the red bird so good ?  
 Where is the best wine made or sold ?  
 Where does Vidrich drink with his warriors bold ?"  
     Sir Vonved, look about thee !

The herd was silent as could be,  
 Of all of this no word knew he ;  
 Then at a stroke the herd he slew,  
 Liver and lung he cleft in two.  
     Sir Vonved, look about thee !

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<sup>1</sup> This man had murdered his father. Omitted by Heine.—  
*Translator.*

Then he came to another flock, and there sat another shepherd, whom he also questioned. This one answers wisely, and Sir Vonved takes a gold ring and puts it on the shepherd's arm. Then he rides further, and comes to Tyge Nold, and slays him with his twelve sons. And, further—

With his horse he rode and ran,  
Sir Vonved, the young nobleman,  
O'er rocks can ride and rivers swim,  
But found no man to talk with him.

Sir Vonved, look about thee !

He came unto the third, and there  
Sat an old man with silver hair :  
" List thou, good shepherd, with thy herd,  
I deem thou'lt wisely speak a word."

Sir Vonved, look about thee !

" Oh, what is rounder than a wheel ?  
Where is the merriest Christmas meal ?  
Where goes the sun across the sky ?  
And where do the feet of a dead man lie ?"

Sir Vonved, look about thee !

" What fileth up the valleys all ?  
What garb is best in royal hall ?  
What crieth louder than the crane ?  
And what is whiter than the swan ?"

Sir Vonved, look about thee !

" Who wears his beard on the back, or in ?  
Who bears his nose beneath his chin ?  
And what is blacker than a bolt ?  
Or faster than a frightened colt ?"

Sir Vonved, look about thee !

"Say where the broadest bridge may be,  
And what do men most hate to see ;  
Where is the highest road alone ?  
And where the coldest drink that's known ?"  
Sir Vonved, look about thee !

"The sun is rounder than a wheel,  
In heaven the merriest Christmas meal ;  
The sun forever seeks the west,  
Towards east the feet of a dead man rest."  
Sir Vonved, look about thee !

"The snow fills up the valleys all,  
Courage beseems a royal hall ;  
Thunder is louder than the crane,  
And angels whiter than the swan."  
Sir Vonved, look about thee !

"The plover's beard on his neck hath grown,  
The bear hath his nose 'neath his chin, alone ;  
Sin is blacker than a bolt,  
And thought flies faster than a colt."  
Sir Vonved, look about thee !

"No broader bridge than ice can be,  
The toad is what man most hates to see ;  
To heaven's the highest road I think,  
And in hell they brew the coldest drink."  
Sir Vonved, look about thee !

"Thy answers are as shrewd, I see,  
As the questions which I put to thee ;  
I trust thee well, and will be bound  
Thou knowest where heroes may be found."  
Sir Vonved, look about thee !

“The Sonderburg is over there,  
Where knights drink mead withouten fear ;  
There are many kempé and warriors known,  
Who well in battle can hold their own.”

Sir Vonved, look about thee !

A golden armet he unwound,  
It weighed, I ween, full fifteen pound ;  
He placed it in the shepherd's belt,  
For showing him where the warriors dwelt.

Sir Vonved, look about thee !

Then he rode unto the castle, and slew first  
Randulf and next Strandulf.

He slew strong Ege Under, another,  
He slew the Ege Karl his brother ;  
So right and left his sword blows fall,  
To right and left he slew them all.

Sir Vonved, look about thee !

Sir Vonved puts his sword in the sheath,  
He rides afar o'er the gloomy heath ;  
In the wild mark he found, ere long,  
A warrior, and he was strong.

Sir Vonved, look about thee !

“Tell me, thou noble rider good,  
Where does the fish stay in the flood ?  
Where is the noblest wine of all ?  
Where does Vidrich drink with his lords in hall ?”

Sir Vonved, look about thee !

“In the east the fish stays in the flood,  
In the north they drink the wine so good ;



In Holland thou findest Vidrich alone,  
With knights and warriors many a one."  
Sir Vonved, look about thee !

From his breast he took an armlet bright,  
And gave it to the other knight :  
"Say that thou wert the very last man,  
Who ever gold from Sir Vonved wan."  
Sir Vonved, look about thee !

Herr Vonved did to a castle ride,  
And bid the porter open wide ;  
He shut the gate, the bolt he drew,  
Over the wall Sir Vonved flew.  
Sir Vonved, look about thee !

His good horse with a rope he bound,  
His way to the castle-hall he found ;  
He sat him at the table free ;  
Never a word to man spake he.  
Sir Vonved, look about thee !

He ate, he drank, he broke his bread,  
Unto the king no word he said :  
"Never I heard before a king,  
So much accursèd chattering !"  
Sir Vonved, look about thee !

The king said to his knights all round,  
"The crazy fellow must be bound ;  
Unless ye bind the stranger tight,  
I ween your service is but slight."  
Sir Vonved, look about thee !

"Take five, take twenty, knights, I say,  
Come thou thyself into the play ;

A whoreson name I give to thee,  
Unless by force thou bindest me."  
Sir Vonved, look about thee !

" King Esmer, the father mine,  
And my mother, proud Adeline,  
Unto me have often told,  
With a knave eat not thy gold."  
Sir Vonved, look about thee !

" Was Esmer father then of thine,  
And thy mother proud Adeline,  
Then thou'rt Vonved, the knight well known,  
Also my own dear sister's son."  
Sir Vonved, look about thee !

" Sir Vonved, wilt thou stay with me ?  
Much honour shall be given thee ;  
But if away thou will'st to ride,  
Many a knight shall go beside."  
Sir Vonved, look about thee !

" All my gold to thee I give,  
If thou here with me wilt live."  
Sir Vonved would not have it so,  
Back to his mother he will go.  
Sir Vonved, look about thee !

Sir Vonved rode along his way,  
Grim he was in his soul that day ;  
Ere he to the castle rode,  
Witches twelve before him stood.  
Sir Vonved, look about thee !

With their rock and reel they came before,  
And smote him on the knee full sore ;

He made his charger leap and spring,  
He slew the twelve all in a ring.  
Sir Vonved, look about thee !

He slew the witches as they stood,  
From him they got right little good ;  
He slew his mother with them all,  
Cut her in thousand pieces small.  
Sir Vonved, look about thee !

In his hall sits Vonved bold,  
He drinks the wine so clear and cold ;  
He played on his gold harp so long,  
That all the strings asunder sprang.  
Sir Vonved, look about thee !<sup>1</sup>

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## CHAPTER VI.

It was a charming spring day when I first left Hamburg. I can still see how in the harbour the golden sunrays gleamed on the tarry bellies of the ships, and think I still hear the joyous, long-drawn *Ho-i-ho!* of the sailors. Such a port in spring-time has a pleasant similarity with the feelings of a youth who goes for the first time out into the world on the great ocean of life. All his thoughts are gaily variegated, pride swells every

<sup>1</sup> The Sphynx story appears to have been strangely reproduced in many forms among the Northern races. In the Edda there is a game of questions and answers, ending in the petrification of a defeated troll. In the Hervor's Saga, King Heidrek puts riddles to Odin in disguise, and loses his life in consequence of breaking the conditions of the game. Several of

sail of his desires—*ho-i-ho!* But soon a storm rises, the horizon grows dark, the wind's bride<sup>1</sup> howls, the planks crack, the waves break the rudder, and the poor ship is wrecked on romantic rocks, or stranded on damp, prosaic sandbanks; or perhaps, brittle and broken, with its masts gone, and without an anchor of hope, it returns to its old harbour, and there moulders away, wretchedly unrigged, as a miserable wreck.

the verses of Sir Vonved recall an old English ballad, which is probably of Danish origin:—

“ Oh, what is longer than the way ?  
 And what is deeper than the sea ?  
 And what is louder than the horn ?  
 And what is sharper than the thorn ?  
 And what is greener than the grass ?  
 And what is worse than a woman was ! ”

ANSWER.

“ Oh, Love is longer than the way,  
 And hell is deeper than the sea,  
 And thunder is louder than the horn,  
 And hunger sharper than the thorn,  
 And poison is greener than the grass,  
 And the devil is worse than a woman was.”

When she these questions answered had,  
 The knight became exceeding glad.

Vonved's mother (a witch) had sent him forth to revenge his father's death. The last verse, which Heine omits, states that he was son of Siegfried the dragon-killer. This ballad made a great impression on George Borrow, who alludes to it in “*Lavengro.*”

<sup>1</sup> Wind's bride. The breeze which precedes a tempest. This passage recalls one in Shakespeare, “How like a younker or a prodigal.”

But there are men who cannot be compared to common ships, because they are like steamboats. They carry a gloomy fire within, and sail against wind and weather; their smoky banner streams behind, like the black plume of the Wild Huntsman; their zigzagged wheels remind one of weighty spurs with which they prick the ribs of the waves, and the obstinate, resistant element must obey their will like a steed; but sometimes the boiler bursts, and the internal fire burns us up!

But now I will escape from metaphor, and get on board a real ship bound from Hamburg to Amsterdam. It was a Swedish vessel, and besides the hero of these pages, was also loaded with iron, being destined probably to bring as a return freight a cargo of cod-fish to the aristocracy of Hamburg, or owls to Athens.<sup>1</sup>

The banks of the Elbe are charming, especially so behind Altona, near Rainville. There Klopstock lies buried. I know of no place where a dead poet could more fitly rest. To exist there as a *living* poet is, of course, a much more difficult matter. How often have I sought thy grave, oh Singer of the Messiah, thou who hast sung with such touching truthfulness the sufferings of Jesus. But thou didst dwell long enough on

<sup>1</sup> *Stockfische*. Dried cod-fish; also meaning stupid people. The American term, "a member of the cod-fish aristocracy," applies very well here to Hamburgers, as previously described by Heine.



the Königstrasse behind the Jungfernstieg to know how prophets are crucified.

On the second day we came to Cuxhaven, which is a colony from Hamburg. The inhabitants are subjects of the Republic, and have a good time of it.<sup>1</sup> When they freeze in winter woollen blankets are sent to them, and when the summer is all too hot they are supplied with lemonade. A high or well-wise senator resides there as pro-consul. He has an income of twenty thousand marks, and rules over five thousand subjects. There is also a sea-bath, which has the great advantage over all others, that it is at the same time an Elbe-bath. A great dam, on which one can walk, leads to Ritzebittel, which also belongs to Cuxhaven. The term is derived from the Phœnician, as *Ritze* and *Buttel* signify in it the mouth of the Elbe. Many historians maintain that Charlemagne only enlarged Hamburg, but that the Phœnicians founded it about the time that Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed, and it is not unlikely that fugitives from these cities fled to the mouth of the Elbe. Between the Fuhlentwiete and the coffee factory men have found old money, coined during the reign of Bera XVI. and Byrsa X. I believe that Hamburg is the old Tarsus whence Solomon received whole shiploads of gold, silver, ivory,

<sup>1</sup> *Haben es sehr gut.*

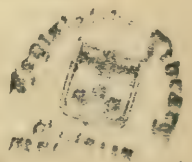
peacocks, and monkeys. Solomon, that is, the king of Judah and Israel, always had a special fancy for gold and monkeys.

This my first voyage can never be forgotten. My old grand-aunt had told me many tales of the sea, which now rose to new life in my memory. I could sit for hours on the deck recalling the old stories, and when the waves murmured it seemed as if I heard my grand-aunt's voice. And when I closed my eyes I could see her before me, as she twitched her lips and told the legend of the Flying Dutchman.

I should have been glad to see some mermaids, such as sit on white rocks and comb their sea-green hair; but I only heard them singing.

However earnestly I gazed many a time down into the transparent water, I could not behold the sunken cities, in which mortals enchanted into fishy forms lead a deep, a marvellous deep, and hidden ocean life. They say that salmon and old rays<sup>1</sup> sit there, dressed like ladies, at their windows, and, fanning themselves, look down into the street, where cod-fish glide by in trim councillors' costume, and dandy young herrings look up at them through eye-glasses, and crabs, lobsters, and all kinds of such common crustaceans, swarm swimming about. I could never see so deep; I only heard the faint bells

<sup>1</sup> *Roche*, the ray or roach.



of the sunken cities peal once more their old melodious chime.

Once by night I saw a great ship with outspread blood-red sails go by, so that it seemed like a dark giant in a scarlet cloak. Was that the *Flying Dutchman*?

But in Amsterdam, where I soon arrived, I saw the grim Mynheer bodily, and that on the stage. On this occasion, in the theatre of that city, I also had an opportunity to make the acquaintance of one of those fairies whom I had sought in vain in the sea. And to her, as she was particularly charming, I will devote a special chapter.

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## CHAPTER VII.

YOU certainly know the fable of the *Flying Dutchman*. It is the story of an enchanted ship which can never arrive in port, and which since time immemorial has been sailing about at sea. When it meets a vessel, some of the unearthly sailors come in a boat and beg the others to take a packet of letters home for them. These letters must be nailed to the mast, else some misfortune will happen to the ship—above all if no Bible be on board, and no horse-shoe nailed to the foremast. The letters are always addressed to people whom no one knows, and who have long

been dead, so that some late descendant gets a letter addressed to a far away great-great-grandmother, who has slept for centuries in her grave. That timber spectre, that grim grey ship, is so called from the captain, a Hollander, who once swore by all the devils that he would get round a certain mountain, whose name has escaped me,<sup>1</sup> in spite of a fearful storm, though he should sail till the Day of Judgement. The devil took him at his word, therefore he must sail for ever, until set free by a woman's truth. The devil in his stupidity has no faith in female truth, and allowed the enchanted captain to land once in seven years and get married, and so find opportunities to save his soul. Poor Dutchman! He is often only too glad to be saved from his marriage and his wife-saviour, and get again on board.

The play which I saw in Amsterdam was based on this legend. Another seven years have passed; the poor Hollander is more weary than ever of his endless wandering; he lands, becomes intimate with a Scottish nobleman, to whom he sells diamonds for a mere song, and when he hears that his customer has a beautiful daughter, he asks that he may wed her. This bargain also is agreed to. Next we see the Scottish home; the

<sup>1</sup> As I have heard the story, Vanderdecken, the captain, swore that he would "make the Cape" of Good Hope by a certain time, or beat round it to all eternity. Vide Marryatt's novel

maiden with anxious heart awaits the bridegroom. She often looks with strange sorrow at a great, time-worn picture which hangs in the hall, and represents a handsome man in the Netherlandish-Spanish garb. It is an old heirloom, and according to a legend of her grandmother, is a true portrait of the Flying Dutchman as he was seen in Scotland a hundred years before, in the time of William of Orange. And with this has come down a warning that the women of the family must beware of the original. This has naturally enough had the result of deeply impressing the features of the picture on the heart of the romantic girl. Therefore, when the man himself makes his appearance, she is startled, but not with fear. He too is moved at beholding the portrait. But when he is informed whose likeness it is, he with tact and easy conversation turns aside all suspicion, jests at the legend, laughs at the Flying Dutchman, the Wandering Jew of the Ocean, and yet, as if moved by the thought, passed into a pathetic mood, depicting how terrible the life must be of one condemned to endure unheard-of tortures on a wild waste of waters—how his body itself is his living coffin, wherein his soul is terribly imprisoned—how life and death alike reject him, like an empty cask scornfully thrown by the sea on the shore, and as contemptuously repulsed



again into the sea—how his agony is as deep as the sea on which he sails—his ship without anchor, and his heart without hope.

I believe that these were nearly the words with which the bridegroom ends. The bride regards him with deep earnestness, casting glances meanwhile at his portrait. It seems as if she had penetrated his secret; and when he afterwards asks, "Katherine, wilt thou be true to me?" she answers, "True to death."

I remember that just then I heard a laugh, and that it came not from the pit but from the gallery of the gods above. As I glanced up I saw a wondrous lovely Eve in Paradise, who looked seductively at me, with great blue eyes. Her arm hung over the gallery, and in her hand she held an apple, or rather an orange.<sup>1</sup> But instead of symbolically dividing it with me, she only metaphorically cast the peel on my head. Was it done intentionally or by accident? That I would know! But when I entered the Paradise to cultivate the acquaintance, I was not a little startled to find a white soft creature, a wonderfully womanly tender being, not languishing, yet delicately clear as crystal, a form of home-like propriety<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Apfelsine.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ein Bild häuslicher Zucht.*

"A creature not too good  
For human nature's daily food."

and fascinating amiability. Only that there was something on the left upper lip which curved or twined like the tail of a slippery gliding lizard. It was a mysterious trait, something such as is not found in pure angels, and just as little in mere devils. This expression comes not from evil, but from the *knowledge* of good and evil—it is a smile which has been poisoned or flavoured by tasting the Apple of Eden. When I see this expression on soft, full, rosy, ladies' lips, then I feel in my own a cramp-like twitching—a convulsive yearning—to kiss those lips: it is our Affinity.<sup>1</sup>

I whispered into the ear of the beauty:—

“*Yuffrou*,<sup>2</sup> I will kiss thy mouth.”

“*Bei Gott, Mynheer!* that is a good idea,” was the hasty answer, which rang with bewitching sound from her heart.

But—no. I will here draw a veil over, and end the story or picture of which the Flying Dutchman was the frame. Thereby will I revenge myself on the prurient prudes who devour such narratives with delight, and are enraptured with them to their heart of hearts, *et plus ultra*, and then abuse the narrator, and turn up their noses at him in society, and decry him as immoral. It is a nice story, too, delicious as preserved pine-apple

<sup>1</sup> *Wahlverwandschaft*. Here better translated by “passional affinity.”

<sup>2</sup> *Yuffrou*. Miss, young lady.

or fresh caviare or truffles in Burgundy, and would be pleasant reading after prayers ; but out of spite, and to punish old offences, I will suppress it. Here I make a long dash

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Which may be supposed to be a black sofa on which we sat as I wooed. But the innocent must suffer with the guilty, and I dare say that many a good soul looks bitterly and reproachfully at me. However, unto these of the better kind I will admit that I was never so wildly kissed as by this Dutch blonde, and that she most triumphantly destroyed the prejudice which I had hitherto held against blue eyes and fair hair. *Now* I understand why an English poet has compared such women to frozen champagne. In the icy crust lies hidden the strongest extract. There is nothing more piquant than the contrast between external cold and the inner fire which, Bacchante-like, flames up and irresistibly intoxicates the happy carouser. Ay, far more than in brunettes does the fire of passion burn in many a sham-calm holy image with golden-glory hair, and blue angel's eyes, and pious lily hands. I knew a blonde of one of the best families in Holland who at times left her beautiful chateau on the Zuyder-Zee and went incognito to Amsterdam, and there in the theatre threw orange-peel on the head of any one who pleased her, and gave herself up to the wildest debauchery, like a Dutch Messalina ! . . .

When I re-entered the theatre, I came in time to see the last scene of the play, where the wife of the Flying Dutchman on a high cliff wrings her hands in despair, while her unhappy husband is seen on the deck of his unearthly ship, tossing on the waves. He loves her, and will leave her lest she be lost with him, and he tells her all his dreadful destiny, and the cruel curse which hangs above his head. But she cries aloud, "I was ever true to thee, and I know how to be ever true unto death!"

Saying this she throws herself into the waves, and then the enchantment is ended. The Flying Dutchman is saved, and we see the ghostly ship slowly sink into the abyss of the sea.

The moral of the play is that women should never marry a Flying Dutchmen, while we men may learn from it that one can through women go down and perish—under favourable circumstances!

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### CHAPTER VIII.

IT was not in Amsterdam alone that the gods were so kind as to take pains to remove my prejudice against blondes. I had opportunities all over Holland to correct my errors in this respect. By my life! I will not exalt the ladies

of Holland at the expense of those of other countries—heaven keep me from such injustice!—which would be in me rank ingratitude. Every country has its own kind of women and its own cookery, and in both it is all a matter of taste. One man likes roast chicken, another roast duck; as for me, I love both, and roast goose too.

Regarded from the high idealistic standard, women the world over have a wonderful affinity with the *cuisine* or cookery of their country, wherever it be. Are not British beauties now—candidly confessed—just so wholesome, nourishing, solid, substantial, inartistic, and yet so admirable as old England's good and simple food: roast beef, roast mutton, pudding in flaming cognac, vegetables boiled once in water, with only two kinds of gravy, of which one is melted butter.<sup>1</sup> There smiles no *fricassée*, there we are softly deceived by no flattering *vol-au-vent*, there sighs no refined *ragout*, there we are not flirted with and flattered by a thousand kinds of stuffed, boiled, puffed, roasted, sugared, piquant, sentimental, declamatory, declaratory dishes such as we find in a French restaurant, and which have a startling

<sup>1</sup> I think it was Voltaire who first remarked that England had one hundred religions and only one sauce, *i.e.*, one gravy. Even to-day, while there is very commonly in the United States a different gravy for every roast, there is the same "made" article in England at many very respectable tables for all. But the meat is good.



likeness to all beautiful Frenchwomen. Still we might often observe that by all these the real thing itself is only regarded as a secondary affair, that the roast is not worth so much as the gravy, and that here taste, grace, and elegance are the principal and principle.

Does not the yellow fat, passionately spiced and flavoured, humorously garnished and yet yearning ideal cookery of Italy, express to the life the whole character of Italian beauties? Oh, how I often long for the Lombard *stuffados* and *zampettis*, for the *fegatellis*, *tagliarinis*, and *broccoliis* of blessed Tuscany. All swims in oil, delicate and tender, and trills the sweet melodies of Rossini, and weeps from onion perfume and desire. But macaroni must thou eat with thy fingers, and then it is called—Beatrice!<sup>1</sup>

I often think of Italy, and oftenest by night. The day before yesterday I dreamed that I was there—a checquered harlequin, and lay all lazy under a weeping willow. The hanging sprays of

<sup>1</sup> *Stuffado* (correctly *stufato*), stewed meat or *ragout*; *zampetti di castrato*, or *di porco*, sheeps' feet or pettitoes; *fegatello*, a bit of liver rolled up in its caul; *tagliarini*, hashes or minces, also a kind of *khibab*; *brocoli*, same as in English. None of these, however, are first-class dishes or delicacies, and they indicate that Heine had very little knowledge of Italian cookery of the better class. But of all this one may say, *Nous avons changé tout cela*. Now there is hardly a first-class hotel in Italy where there is more than a very occasional Italian dish ever served. *The cuisine* was much changed even in the Forties.—*Translator*.

the tree were of macaroni, which fell, long and lovely, into my mouth, and in between, instead of sunrays, flowed sweet streams of golden butter, and at last a fair white rain of powdered Parmesan.

But from the macaroni of which one dreams no one grows fat—Beatrice!

Not a word about German cookery. It has every virtue and only one fault; and what that is I shall not tell. It has deeply feeling, susceptible pastry without decision, enamoured egg-dishes, admirable steamed dumplings,<sup>1</sup> soul soup with barley,<sup>2</sup> pancakes with apples and pork, virtuous home-forced meat balls, and sour cabbage—lucky he who can digest it!

As for the Dutch cookery, it differs from the last, firstly in neatness, secondly by its peculiar relish. The preparation of fish is there indescribably delightful. A perfume of celery, which moves one to the very heart, and is yet deeply intellectual. A self-conscious *naïveté* and garlic.<sup>3</sup>

But when I arrived in Leyden I found the food frightfully bad. The Republic of Hamburg had spoiled me—I must again extol the cookery there, and avail myself of the opportunity to praise the pretty girls and dames of that dear

<sup>1</sup> *Tüchtige Dampfnudeln*. In Pennsylvania known as Noodles.

<sup>2</sup> *Gemüthssuppe*. *Gemuth* is rather one's peculiar disposition or habitual temperament. Pun on *Gemüse*, soft or green vegetables.

<sup>3</sup> Perhaps it is hardly worth while to remind the reader that as in the case of Italy, all of this peculiar cookery has almost disappeared from the hotels of Holland.

town. Oh, ye divinities! how for the first four weeks did I wish myself back among the smoked-meating houses, the butchers' flesh-world, and the deviltries and the mock turtle-doves of Hammonia!<sup>1</sup> I yearned heart and stomach. If the landlady of the Red Cow had not at last fallen in love with me, I should have died of longing.

Hail to thee, landlady of that Red Cow!

She was a little woman, very plump, with a very little round head. Red little cheeks, little blue eyes, roses and violets. Many an hour we sat side by side in the garden, and drank tea out of real Chinese porcelain cups. It was a beautiful garden, with three and four cornered beds symmetrically strewed with gold sand, cinnabar, and little shining shells. The trunks of the trees were prettily painted red and blue. Copper cages full of canary birds. The most expensive bulbous flowers in variegated and glazed pots. Yew trees charmingly cut into various obelisks, pyramids, vases, and animal forms. Yes, there was a green ox cut from yew, who looked at me jealously when I embraced the lovely landlady of the Red Cow!

Hail to thee, landlady of the Red Cow!

When my frow had covered the upper part of her head with Frisian gold-plates, defended her person with an armour of many-coloured stiff,

<sup>1</sup> *Nach den Rauchfleischlichkeiten und nach den Mockturtel-  
lauben Hammonias.*

hard, damask silk, and loaded her arms with the white abundance of her Brabant lace, she looked like a fabulous Chinese puppet—say the goddess of porcelain. And when I, enraptured and inspired, kissed her with a loving smack on both cheeks, she sat in porcelain stillness and sighed porce-languishly,<sup>1</sup> “Mynheer!”—then all the tulips in the garden seemed to feel and wave and sigh in sympathy, “Mynheer!”

This delicate *liaison* procured me many delicacies. For every love-scene of the kind had an influence on the market-basket, which brought provisions to the house and to me. My table companions, six other students, could judge to a nicety by the roast veal or *filet-de-bœuf* how much I was loved by the landlady of the Red Cow. When the dinner was bad, then the word was, “Just see how miserably Schnabelewopski looks! how yellow and wrinkled his face is; what a cat’s melancholy look there is in his eyes, as if they were coming out of his head; why, it’s no wonder that our landlady is vexed with him and gives us poor food!” Or else, “Lord help us! Schnabelewopski is growing weaker and feebler every day, and by and by the landlady will love him no more, and then we shall have short commons every day like this; we must feed him up well, so as to make him look nice and plump and

<sup>1</sup> *Ganz porcellanag.*

rosy." And then they forced all the worst of everything there was on me, and compelled me to eat a great deal of celery.<sup>1</sup> But when we had poor fare for several days in succession, then I was besieged with the most passionate prayers for better provender; to inflame anew the heart of our landlady, to show greater tenderness towards her—in short, to sacrifice myself for the general welfare. It was set before me in long speeches how noble and glorious it was when any one gave himself up heroically for the good of his fellow-citizens, like Regulus, who let himself be put into a spiked barrel, or Theseus, who voluntarily entered the cave of the Minotaur, and then Livy and Plutarch were cited to give examples.

Yes, and I was also pictorially exhorted to rival these examples, by drawing these deeds on the wall, with grotesque variations, for the Minotaur was made to look like the Red Cow on the tavern sign, and the Carthaginian spiked tun like the landlady herself. And those ungrateful youths selected the personal appearance of that excellent woman as a constant butt for their wit. They imitated her round figure with apples, and rolled it up and kneaded its likeness from bread-crumbs. They took a large apple for the body, put a little rosy crab-apple on this for the head, and into the former stuck two toothpicks for feet. Or, as I said,

<sup>1</sup> Supposed to be an aphrodisiac.



they made her from bread-crumbs, and then a very little mannikin of the same, which they put on her lap, making the most scandalous remarks. Thus, one said that the smaller figure looked like Hannibal climbing the Alps, while another declared it was more like Marius sitting on the ruins of Carthage. All the same, if I had not climbed those Alps, or seated myself amid those ruins of Carthage, my table companions would have had but sorry fare.

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### CHAPTER IX.

WHEN the food became very bad indeed, then we disputed as to the existence of God. But the beneficent Deity always had the majority. Only three of the table society were atheistically inclined, and even they gave way if we had at least good cheese for dessert. The most zealous Theist was one little Simson,<sup>1</sup> and when he disputed with tall Van Pitter as to whether there was a personal God, he became at times wildly excited, and ran up and down the hall crying constantly, "*Bei Gott!* that isn't fair!"<sup>2</sup> Tall Van Pitter, a lean Frisian, whose soul was as calm as the water in a Dutch canal, and whose

<sup>1</sup> Simson, *id est* Samson.

<sup>2</sup> *Bei Gott, das ist nicht erlaubt.*

words followed one another as leisurely as one canal boat after another, drew his arguments from the German philosophy which was at that time very much studied in Leyden. He ridiculed the narrow-minded men who attribute to God a particular private existence; he even accused them of blasphemy, because they gifted God with wisdom, justice, love, and other human qualities, which are utterly inappropriate, because these are relatively the negations or antitheses of human errors, such as stupidity, injustice, and hate. But when Van Pitter thus developed his own pantheistic views, there came forth against him the fat Fichtean, Dricksen of Utrecht, who stoutly confuted his vague conception of a God spread forth through all Nature—that is to say, existing only in space. Yes, he even declared it was blasphemy to so much as speak of the *existence* of God, since the very idea of existence involved that of space—in short, something substantial. Yes, it was blasphemy even to say of God *He is*, because the purest or most abstract Being<sup>1</sup> could not be conceived without limitations of sense, whereas, if man would think of God, he must abstract Him from all substance, and not think of Him as a form of extension, but as a series or order of developments, God not being an action *per se*, but only the principle of a cosmos beyond conception.

<sup>1</sup> *Das reinste Sein.*

Hearing this little Samson fairly raved, and ran up and down the hall, and cried ever more loudly, "O God, O God! By God, that is not fair, O God!" I believe that he would, in honour of God, have beaten the fat Fichtean, had not his arms been too weak; but as it was he often attacked him, when the big and burly one would grasp him by his little arms, hold him fast, and without taking the pipe from his mouth, blow his airy arguments, mixed with tobacco smoke, into Samson's face, so that the little man was almost stifled with fume and fret, and wailed more and more pitifully, "O God! O God!" but it availed him naught, though he defended His cause so valiantly.

Despite this divine indifference, despite this almost human unthankfulness, little Samson remained a staunch champion of Theism, as I believe from inborn inclination; for his father belonged to God's chosen folk, a race which God once very specially protected, and which, in consequence, has maintained till this day a great dependence on him. Jews are ever the most devoted of Deists, especially those who, like little Samson, were born in the vicinity of Frankfort. These may be as republican as they please in political questions—yes, they may roll in the very mud of *sans culottéism*—but the instant that religious ideas are involved they become the humblest servants of

their Jehovah, the old fetish, who, however, will know nothing of the entire company, and who has newly baptized himself to a divinely pure spirit.

I believe that this divinely pure spirit, this new ruler of heaven, who is now conceived as so moral, so cosmopolite and universal, takes it ill at heart that the poor Jews, who knew Him in his rude first form, remind him every day in their synagogues of his early and obscure national relations. Perhaps the ancient Lord would fain forget that he was of Palestine origin, and once the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and was in those times called JEHOVAH.

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### CHAPTER X.

WHILE I lived at Leyden I saw a great deal of little Samson, and he will be often mentioned in these memoirs. Next to him I met most frequently another of my table friends, young Van Moeulen. I could look for hours at his perfectly symmetric face, thinking what his sister, whom I had never seen, must be like. All that I knew of her was that she was said to be the most beautiful woman in Waterland. Van Moeulen was also a beautiful human being, an Apollo, not of marble, but rather of cheese. He was a strange mixture of mind and matter, soul and solid rest. Once in a café

he so enraged an Irish gentleman that the latter drew his pistol and fired at him. The ball, however, only knocked the pipe from his mouth; but Van Moeulen's features were as immovable as any Dutchman's head could be, and in the calmest, most indifferent tone, he said, "*Jan, e nûe piep!*" "John, a fresh pipe!" But his smile was intolerable to me, for then he showed a row of very small white teeth, which looked like a fish spine. Nor did I like it that he wore great gold ear-rings.<sup>1</sup> He had the strange habit of rearranging every day the furniture in his rooms, and when a visitor came he was generally found putting his bureau where the bed had been, or making the study table change places with the sofa.

Little Samson was in this respect his most painfully earnest antithesis. He could not endure that any one should disturb the least thing in his room; he even became restless and disturbed if one so much as picked up the snuffers. Everything must lay just as it was, for his goods and chattels served him as aids by means of which, according to the principles of mnemonics, he fixed all kinds of historical dates or philosophic principles in his memory. Once when the housemaid

<sup>1</sup> A generation ago many men wore gold ear-rings, especially in Holland, under the belief that they were good for weak eyes, or that they in some way benefited the sight. Sailors were the last to follow this custom.



carried away from his room an old chest, and removed his shirts and stockings from the bureau for the laundress, he was inconsolable when he returned, declaring that he had lost his whole Assyrian History, and that all his proofs of the immortality of the soul, which he had arranged so systematically in the drawers, were gone to the wash! <sup>1</sup>

Among the originals whom I learned to know in Leyden belongs Mynheer van Bissen, a cousin of Van Moelen, who introduced him to me. He was professor of theology at the university, and I attended his lectures on the Canticles of Solomon and the Apocalypse of St. John. He was a fine, flourishing, florid man, perhaps of fifty-five, and in his chair was very staid and serious. But once when I called on him and found no one in his study, I saw through the half-opened door of a side-room a very strange sight. This cabinet was furnished in a half-Chinese, half-Pompadour style, with shot-gold <sup>2</sup> damask hangings on the wall, on the ground the most costly Persian carpet,

<sup>1</sup> Few things which were in the list of scholastic absurdities escaped Heine, and it is not remarkable that he should here satirise the Mnemonic system, which teaches us to remember anything by first remembering *something else*, instead of directly cultivating memory itself.

<sup>2</sup> *Goldig-schillernde Damasttapeten*. *Schillern* is to shine while changing colour. Schiller the poet is said to derive his name from a wine so called from its gleam.

and everywhere marvellous Indian idols, bric-a-brac of mother-of-pearl, flowers, peacock's feathers, and gems, the sofa of red velvet with gold tassels; and among it all a raised seat, which looked like a throne, on which sat a little girl, perhaps three years old, clad in a blue satin silver embroidered dress of very antiquated fashion. She held in one hand, like a sceptre, a many-coloured peacock duster, and in the other a faded wreath of laurel. Before her Mynheer van Bissen was with his little negro page, his poodle, and his monkey, rolling over and over on the ground. They grappled with, tugged and bit one another, while the little girl and a green parrot sitting on its perch cried "Bravo!" At last Mynheer rose from the ground, kneeled before the child, and expressing in a long Latin speech the bravery with which he had fought and conquered his foes, let the little girl crown him with the laurel wreath, while she and the parrot cried "Bravo!" in which I joined as I entered the room.

Mynheer appeared to be somewhat taken aback as I surprised him in his performance. This, I was assured, was his daily amusement; every day he fought and defeated the little negro, the poodle, and the monkey, and was then crowned by the little girl, who was not, however, his own child, but a foundling from the Orphans' Asylum of Amsterdam.

## CHAPTER XI.

THE house in which I lodged in Leyden was once the dwelling of Jan Steen, the great Jan Steen, whom I regard as being as great as Raphael.<sup>1</sup> And he was even his equal as a *religious* painter. That will be clearly seen when the religion of pain and suffering shall have ended, and the religion of joy tear the mournful veil from the rose-bushes of this earth, and the nightingales at

1 "Und dus exclaim der Breitmann  
 In wonder-solemn shdrain,  
 De cratest men vere Brauwer,  
 Van Ostadé und JAN STEEN.  
 Der Raffael' vas vel enof,  
 Dot is, in his small way ;  
 Boot, Gott in Himmel ! vot vos *he*  
 Compared mit soosh as dey !

"De more-ve digs indo de dirt,  
 Or less ve seeks a star,  
 De nearer ve to Natur' coom,  
 More pantheistisch far.  
 To him who reads dis mystery right,  
 Mit inspiradion gifen,  
 Der Raffael's rollin' in de dirt,  
 While Brauwer soars to heaven."

—*The Breitmann Ballads.*

I do not know whether this is an instance of precoincidence, or of the mind's unconsciously retaining and reproducing an image. I suppose it is the latter ; but when I wrote these verses I absolutely believed the conception to be original.—*Note by Translator.*

last dare pour forth in rapture their long-suppressed notes of pleasure.

But really no nightingale will ever sing so gaily and rejoicingly as Jan Steen has painted. No one ever felt so deeply that, on this earth, life ought to be one endless Kirmes.<sup>1</sup> He knew that our life is only a coloured kiss of God, and that the Holy Ghost reveals Himself most gloriously in light and laughter.

His eyes looked out into light, and the light mirrored itself in his laughing eyes.

And Jan was always a dear good fellow. When the harsh old preacher of Leyden sat down on the other side of the fireplace opposite to him, and gave him a long exhortation as to his jovial life, his laughing, un-Christian ways, his drunkenness and ill-regulated domestic life and reprobate merriment, Jan listened to him two long hours without betraying the least impatience at this preaching of punishment, until he at last interrupted him with the words, "Yes, Domine, but the light would be much better—yes—I beg you, Domine, just turn your stool a little round to the fire, so that your face may get a redder tone, while the rest of the body is in the shadow!"

<sup>1</sup> *Kirmess*, or *Kermess*, church mass. An annual festival which, as kept in Heine's time in the great cities of Holland, was of such general, roaring debauchery as would seem incredible to people of the present day. These extravagant *Kermesses* died out about the same time as the Italian carnivals.

The Domine rose in a roaring rage and departed; but Jan caught up his palette and painted the stern old gentleman, just as he had sat in that punishment-sermon position for model without knowing it. The picture is admirable, and it hung in my bedroom in Leyden.<sup>1</sup>

After having seen so many pictures of Jan Steen in Holland it seems to me as if I knew the man's whole life. Yes, I knew his whole kith and kin and acquaintance, wife and children, mother and cousins all, domestic foes, and other hangers on, absolutely face by face. They salute like friends from all his pictures, and a collection of them would be a biography of the painter. He has often set forth the deepest secrets of his soul with a few touches of his brush. I am very sure that his wife often scolded him for drinking, for in his picture of the Bean Feast, where Jan sits with his whole family at table, there we see his wife with a great wine jug in her hand, her eyes gleaming like those of a Bacchante. I am sure, however, that the good woman really drank very little, and the rogue wished to humbug us with the idea that it was his wife and not he who was given to toping. For this cause he himself laughs all the more joyfully from the

<sup>1</sup> This anecdote and others indicate that eye memory or "visional representation" was much more cultivated by the older artists than by those of the present day.



painting. There he sits, perfectly happy; his son is the Bean-King, and stands on a stool wearing a gilt crown; his old mother, with the happiest wrinkled face, holds the youngest scion in her arms; the musicians play their maddest, merriest dancing melodies, while the ever economical thinking, economically grumbling good wife is set forth to all futurity as if she were tipsy!

How often in my lodgings in Leyden have I thought over the domestic life which this glorious Jan Steen must have experienced and endured. Many a time it seemed that I saw him in the body, sitting at his easel, now and then grasping the great pitcher, "reflecting and drinking, and drinking yet again without reflection." It is not a dreary Catholic spectre, but a modern bright and merry spirit of joyousness, which, now that he is gone, haunts his studio, to paint jolly pictures and drink. Such will be the ghosts whom our descendants will see at times by bright daylight, while the sun shines through the clear white panes; while it is not a black and doleful bell, but scarlet-swelling tones of trumpets, which, pealing from the tower, will announce the pleasant dinner-hour!

The memory of Jan Steen is, however, the best, or rather the only pleasant souvenir of my dwelling in Leyden. Had it not been for that, I should never have held out for eight days in

that house. Its exterior was wretched, melancholy, and morbid, or altogether un-Dutch. The dark, mouldy building stood close by the canal, and when one went to the other side it reminded one of an old witch looking at herself in a gleaming magic mirror. As on all Dutch roofs, there always stood on ours a couple of storks. Close by me lodged the cow whose milk I drank every morning, and there was a poultry-roost under my window. My lady-poultry neighbours laid good eggs, but as they always, previous to publishing their works, preceded them by a long and wearisome prospectus of cackling, my enjoyment of their products was materially diminished.<sup>1</sup> Among special annoyances was my landlord's playing the violin all day, and my landlady's playing the devil with him out of jealousy all night.

He who would know all about the mutual relations of this pair needed only to listen to them in a duet. The man performed on the violoncello and his wife on the violin d'amour, but they did not play in time, so that he was always a note behind, and there came withal such cutting cruel tones that when the 'cello growled and the violin gave grinding groans, one seemed to hear a matri-

<sup>1</sup> There is a fable by Claudius in which a hen is remonstrated with for making a great noise *after* laying her eggs. To which the hen replies that—

"I publish first my work  
And then—review it."

monial row without words. And after the husband stopped playing, the wife always kept on, as if determined to have the last word. She was a large but very thin woman, nothing but skin and bones, a mouth in which false teeth chattered, a low forehead, almost no chin, but a nose which made up for the deficiency, the tip of which curved like a beak, and with which she seemed, when playing, to muffle the sound of a string.

My landlord was about fifty years of age, and had slender legs, a worn away pale face, little green eyes, always blinking like those of a sentinel who has the sun shining in his face. He was by trade a bandage maker, and in religion an Anabaptist. He read the Bible so assiduously that it passed into his nightly dreams, and while his eyes kept winking he told his wife over their coffee how he had again been honoured by converse with holiest dignitaries, how he had even met the highest Holy Jehovah, and how all the ladies of the Old Testament treated him in the friendliest and tenderest manner. This last occurrence was not at all to the liking of my landlady, and she not unfrequently manifested a jealous mood as to these meetings with the blessed damsels of the early days. "If he had only confined his acquaintance, now," she said, "to the pure mother Mary, or old Martha, or, for all I care, even Mary Magdalen, who reformed ; but to be meeting

night after night those drinking hussies of Lot's daughters, and that precious Mrs. Judith and the vagabond Queen of Sheba, and similar dubious dames, could not be endured." But nothing could equal her rage when one morning her husband gave her an inspired account of how he had enjoyed an interview with the beautiful Esther, who had begged him to help in her toilet when enhancing her charms to fascinate Ahasuerus. In vain did the poor man protest that Mordecai himself had introduced him to his fair ward, that she was quite half-clad, and that his attentions had been confined to combing out her long black hair—the enraged wife beat the poor man with his own bandages, poured hot coffee into his face, and would certainly have made away with him if he had not sworn, in the most solemn manner, in future to avoid all Old Testamental intercourse with ladies, and keep company in future only with the patriarchs and prophets.

The results of this ill-treatment were that from that time Mynheer said nothing about his nightly adventures; he became a religious roué, and confessed to me that he had not only become ultra-intimate with the chaste Susanna, but that he had dreamed his way into Solomon's harem, and taken tea with his thousand wives.

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## CHAPTER XII.

WRETCHED jealousy! Owing to it one of my sweetest dreams—and perhaps the life of little Samson—were brought to a mournful end!

What is dreaming? What is death? Is it only an interruption of life or its full cessation? Yes, for people who only know the Past and the Future, and do not live an eternity in every moment of the Present, death must be terrible! When their two crutches, Space and Time, fall away, then they sink into the eternal Nothing.

And dreams? Why are we not more afraid before going to sleep than to be buried? Is it not terrible that the body can be as if dead all night, while the spirit in us leads the wildest life—a life full of all those terrors of that parting which we have established between life and soul! When in the future both shall be again united in our consciousness, then there will be perhaps no more dreams, or else only invalids, those whose harmony has been disturbed, will dream. The ancients dreamed only softly and seldom; a strong and powerfully impressive dream was for them an event, and it was recorded in their histories.

Real dreaming began with the Jews, the people of the Spirit, and attained its highest development among the Christians, or the



spiritual people. Our descendants will shudder when they read what a ghostly life we led, how Humanity was cloven in us and only one half had a real life. Our time—and it begins with the crucifixion of Christ—will be regarded as the great period of illness of Humanity.

And yet, what beautiful sweet dreams we have been able to dream! Our healthy descendants will hardly be able to understand them! All the splendours of the world disappeared from around us, and we found them again *in our own souls*; yes, there the perfume of the trampled roses, and the sweetest songs of the frightened nightingales took refuge.

Thus I feel, and die of the unnatural anxieties and horrible dainties and sweet pains of our time. When I at night undress and lay me in bed, and stretch myself out at full length, and cover myself with the white sheets, I often shudder involuntarily, it seems so like being a corpse and burying myself. Then I close my eyes as quickly as I can to escape this fearful thought, and to save myself in the Land of Dreams.

It was a sweet, kind, sunshiny dream. The heaven was heavenly blue and cloudless, the sea sea-green and still. A boundless horizon; and on the water sailed a gaily-pennoned skiff, and on its deck I sat caressingly at the feet of Jadviga. I read to her strange and dreamy

love songs, which I had written on strips of rose-coloured paper, sighing yet joyful, and she listened with incredulous yet inclined ear and deeply-loving smiles, and now and then hastily snatched the leaves from my hand and threw them in the sea. But the beautiful water fairies, with snow-white breasts and arms, rose from the water and caught the fluttering love-lays as they fell. As I bent overboard I could see clearly far down into the depths of the sea, and there sat, as in a social circle, the beautiful water-maids, and among them was a young sprite who, with deeply sympathetic expression, declaimed my love-songs. Wild enraptured applause rang out at every verse; the green-locked beauties applauded so passionately that necks and bosoms grew rosy red, and they praised cordially yet compassionately what they heard. "What strange beings these mortals are! How wonderful their lives, how dire their destinies! They love, and seldom dare express that love; and when they give it utterance at last, they rarely understand one another! And withal they do not lead eternal lives like ours; they are mortal. Only a little time is granted them to seek for happiness, they must grasp it quickly and press it hastily unto their hearts, ere it is gone; therefore their songs of love are so deeply tender, so sweetly painful and anxious, so despairingly gay,

such strange blendings of joy and pain. The melancholy shadow of death falls on their happiest hours, and consoles them lovingly in adversity. They can weep. What poetry there is in mortal tears!"

"Dost thou hear," I said to Jadviga, "how they judge of us? Let us embrace, so that they may pity us no longer, and may envy us!" But she the beloved looked at me with infinite love, and without speaking a word. I had kissed her into silence. She grew pale, and a cold shiver thrilled her lovely form. She lay stiff as white marble in my arms, and I had deemed her dead if streams of tears had not poured from her eyes, and these tears flooded me while I held the loved image ever more firmly in my arms.

All at once I heard the keen shrill voice of my landlady, who wakened me from my dream. She stood before my bed with a dark lantern in her hand, and bade me rise quickly and follow her. She absolutely never looked so ugly before! Without knowing what she wanted, and still half asleep, I went after to where her husband lay, poor man, with night-cap over his eyes, apparently dreaming. He moved his limbs and his lips smiled as if with ineffable happiness, while he rattled and stammered, "Vashti! Queen Vashti! Your Majesty—fear not Ahasuerus—beloved Vashti!"

With eyes glowing with wrath the wife lent over her sleeping spouse, laid her ear to his head as if listening to his thoughts, and whispered to me, "Are you now convinced, Mynbeer Schnabelewopski? He has now a love affair with Queen Esther—the scandalous wretch! I found out this horrid intrigue last night. Yes, he has preferred even a heathen to *me*! But I am wife and a Christian, and you shall see how I will revenge myself!"

Saying this she tore away the bedclothes, and grasping a bandage of tough stag leather, laid it on horribly to the poor sinner. He, awakened so unpleasantly from his Biblical dream, screamed out as loudly as if the capital city of Susa were on fire and all Holland under water, and with his shrieks alarmed the whole neighbourhood.

The next day it was all over Leyden that my landlord had raised this cry because he had caught me by night in company with his wife. This latter had been seen half-undressed through the window, and our housemaid, who was angry at me, and who had been questioned by the landlady of the Red Lion as to the occurrence, told how she herself had seen Myfrow make a nocturnal visit to my room.

Truly I cannot think of this affair without great pain, and what horrible results there were!

## CHAPTER XIII.

If the landlady of the Red Cow had been an Italian she would have poisoned my victuals, but as she was a Dutchwoman she only cooked them as badly as possible. In fact, we experienced the very next day the result of her feminine revenge. The first dish was *no soup*. That was awful, especially for a man brought up decently as I was, who from youth upwards had had soup every day, and who had hitherto never imagined that there was a world where the sun never shone and man soup never knew. The second course was beef, as cold and hard as Myron's cow. Then followed fish, which had indeed an ancient and fish-like smell, and which went untouched in silence as it came. Then came a great, old spectre of a hen, which, far from satisfying our hunger, looked so wretchedly lean and hungry that we, out of sympathetic pity, could not touch it.

"And now, little Samson," cried the burly Dricksen, "dost thou still believe in God? *Is this just?* The Bandage-baggage visits Schnabelwopski in the dark watches of the night, and on that account we must starve by daylight!"

"O God, God!" sighed the little fellow, vilely vexed by such atheistic outbreak, and



perhaps by such a miserable meal. And his irritability increased as the tall Van Pitter let fly his arrows of wit against Anthropomorphists and praised the Egyptians who of yore worshipped oxen and onions; the first because they tasted so well when roasted, and the latter when stuffed.

But little Samson under such mockery became furious, and at last he shot forth his defence of Deism.

“God is for man what the sun is for the flowers. When the rays of his heavenly countenance fall on the flowers, then they grow and open out their calyxes, and unfold their most varied colours. By night, when the sun is gone, they stand sorrowful with closed petals, and sleep or dream of the kisses of the golden rays of the past. Those which are ever in the shadow lose colour and growth, shrink and grow pale, and wilt away miserable and unfortunate. But those which grow entirely in the dark, in old castle vaults, under ruined cloisters, become ugly and poisonous; they twine like snakes; their very smell is unhealthy, evilly numbing, deadly.”

“Oh, you need not spin out your Biblical parable any further,” said burly Dricksen, as he poured into himself a great glass of Schiedam gin. “Thou, little Samson, art a pious blossom who inhales in the sunshine of God the holy

rays of virtue and love to such inspiration that thy soul blooms like a rainbow, while ours, turned away from God, fade colourless and hideous, if we don't indeed spread forth a poisonous stink."

"I once saw in Frankfort," said little Samson, "a watch which did not believe there was any watchmaker. It was of pinchbeck and went very badly."<sup>1</sup>

"I'll show you anyhow that such a repeater knows how to strike,"<sup>2</sup> replied Dricksen, who suddenly became silent and teased Samson no more.

As the latter, notwithstanding his weak little arms, was an admirable fencer, it was determined that the two should duel that day with rapiers. They went at it with great bitterness. The black eyes of little Samson gleamed as if of fire and greatly magnified, and contrasted the more strangely with his little arms, which came forth so pitifully from his rolled-up shirt-sleeves. He became more and more excited; he fought for the existence of God, the old Jehovah, the King of kings. But He aided not in the least His champion, and in the sixth round the little man got a thrust in the lungs.

"O God!" he cried, and fell to the ground.

<sup>1</sup> The famous simile of the watch taken by Paley from Sir Kenelm Digby. *Uhr* in German means both watch and clock.

<sup>2</sup> *Schlagen*, to strike, also means to fence.

## CHAPTER XIV.

THIS scene excited me terribly. But all the fury of my feelings turned against the woman who had directly caused such disaster, and with a heart full of wrath and pain I stormed into the Red Cow.

“Monster, why did you not serve us soup?” These were the words with which I addressed the landlady, who became deadly pale as I entered the kitchen. The porcelain on the chimney-piece trembled at the tone of my voice. I was as desperate as only that man can be who has had no soup, and whose best friend has just had a rapier through his lungs.

“Monster, why did you not serve us soup?” I repeated these words, while the consciously guilty woman stood as if frozen and speechless before me. But at last, as if from opened sluices, the tears poured from her eyes. They flooded her whole face, and ran down into the canal of her bosom. But this sight did not soften me, and with still greater bitterness I cried, “O ye women, I know that ye can weep, but are tears *soup*? Ye are created for our misery. Your looks are lies, and your breath is treason and deceit. Who first ate the apple of sin? Geese saved the Capitol, but a woman ruined Troy.

O Troy, Troy! thou holy fortress of Priam, thou didst fall by a woman! Who cast Marcus Aurelius into destruction? By whom was Marcus Tullius Cicero murdered? Who demanded the head of John the Baptist? Who was the cause of Abelard's mutilation? A woman. History is replete, yea unto repletion, with the terrible examples of man's ruin caused by you. All your deeds are folly, and all your thoughts are ingratitude. We give you the highest, the holiest flame of our hearts, our love—and what do we get for it? Beef that the devil would not eat, and worse poultry. Wretch and monster, why did you serve no soup?"

Myfrow began to stammer a series of excuses, and conjured me, by all the sweet memories of our love, to forgive her. She promised to provide better provender than before, and only charge six florins per head, though the Groote Dohlen landlord asked eight for his ordinary. She went so far as to promise oyster patties for the next day—yes, in the soft tone of her voice there was even a perfume as of truffles. But I remained firm. I was determined to break with her for ever, and left the kitchen with the tragic words, "Farewell; between us two all is cooked out forever!"

In leaving I heard something fall. Was it a pot for cooking or Myfrow herself? I did not

take the pains to look, and went straight to the Groote Dohlen to order six covers for the next day.

After this important business I hurried to little Samson's house and found him in evil case. He lay in an immense old-fashioned bed which had no curtains, and at the corners of which were great marbled wooden pillars which bore above a richly gilt canopy. The face of the little fellow was pale from pain, and in the glance which he cast at me was so much grief, kindness, and wretchedness, that I was touched to the heart. The doctor had just left him, saying that his wound was serious. Van Moeulen, who alone had remained to watch all night, sat before his bed, and was reading to him from the Bible.

"Schnabelewopski," sighed the sufferer, "it is good that you came. You may listen, and 'twill do you good. That is a dear, good book. My ancestors bore it all over the world with them, and much pain, misfortune, cursing and hatred, yes, death itself, did they endure for it. Every leaf in it cost tears and blood: it is the written fatherland of the children of God; it is the holy inheritance of Jehovah."

"Don't talk so much; it's bad for you," said Van Moeulen.

"And indeed," I added, "don't talk of Jehovah, the most ungrateful of gods, for whose existence you have fought to-day."



“O God!” sighed the little man, and tears fell from his eyes, “Thou help’st our enemies.”

“Don’t talk so much,” said Van Moeulen again. “And thou, Schnabelewopski,” he whispered to me, “excuse me if I bore thee; the little man would have it that I should read to him the history of his namesake Samson. We are at the fourteenth chapter—listen!

“‘Samson went down to Timnath, and saw a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines.’”

“No,” said the patient with closed eyes, “we are at the sixteenth chapter. It is to me as if I were living in all that which you read me, as if I heard the sheep bleating as they feed by Jordan, as if I myself had set fire to the tails of the foxes and chased them through the fields of the Philistines, and as if I had slain a thousand Philistines with the jawbone of an ass. Oh the Philistines!<sup>1</sup> they enslaved and mocked us, and made us pay toll like swine, and slung me out of doors from the ball-room on the Horse, and kicked me at Bockenheim—kicked me out of doors from the Horse!—oh, by God, that was not fair.”

“He is feverish, and has wild fancies,” softly said Van Moeulen, and began the sixteenth chapter.

<sup>1</sup> Samson here confuses the Philistines of old with the modern article. All townspeople are called Philistines by the students.

“Then went Samson to Gaza, and saw there an harlot, and went in unto her.

“And it was told the Gazites, saying, Samson is come hither. And they compassed him in, and laid wait for him all night in the gate of the city, and were quiet all the night, saying, In the morning, when it is day, we shall kill him.

“And Samson lay till midnight, and arose at midnight, and took the doors of the gate of the city, and the two posts, and went away with them, bar and all, and put them upon his shoulders, and carried them up to the top of an hill that is before Hebron.

“And it came to pass afterward, that he loved a woman in the valley of Sorek whose name was Delilah.

“And the lords of the Philistines came up unto her and said unto her, Entice him and see wherein his great strength lieth, and by what means we may prevail against him, that we may bind him to afflict him: and we will give thee every one of us eleven hundred pieces of silver.

“And Delilah said to Samson, Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great strength lieth, and wherewith thou mightest be bound to afflict thee.

“And Samson said unto her, If they bind me with seven green withs that were never dried, then shall I be weak and be as another man.

“Then the lords of the Philistines brought up

to her seven green withs which had not been dried, and she bound him with them.

“‘ Now there were men lying in wait, abiding with her in the chamber. And she said, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he brake the withs, as a thread of tow is broken when it toucheth the fire. So his strength was not known.’ ”

“ Oh, the fools of Philistines ! ” cried the little man, and smiled well pleased ; “ and they wanted to take me up and put me in the constable’s guard.”

Van Moeulen read on :—

“ ‘ And Delilah said to Samson, Behold, thou hast mocked me, and told me lies : now tell me, I pray thee, wherewith thou mightest be bound.

“ ‘ And he said unto her, If they bind me fast with new ropes that never were occupied, then shall I be weak, and be as another man.

“ ‘ Delilah therefore took new ropes, and bound him therewith, and said unto him, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And there were liers in wait abiding in the chamber. And he brake them from off his arms like a thread.’ ”

“ Fools of Philistines,” cried the little man.

“ ‘ And Delilah said unto Samson, Hitherto thou hast mocked me, and told me lies : tell me wherewith thou mightest be bound ? And he said unto her, If thou weavest the seven locks of my head with the web.

“ ‘And she fastened it with the pin, and said unto him, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awaked out of his sleep, and went away with the pin of the beam, and with the web.’ ”

The little man laughed. “That was in the Eschenheimer Lane.” But Van Moeulen continued:—

“ ‘And she said unto him, How canst thou say, I love thee, when thine heart is not with me? thou hast mocked me these three times, and hast not told me wherein thy great strength lieth.

“ ‘And it came to pass, when she pressed him daily with her words, and urged him, so that his soul was vexed unto death;

“ ‘That he told her all his heart, and said unto her, There hath not come a razor upon mine head; for I have been a Nazarite unto God from my mother’s womb; if I be shaven, then my strength will go from me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man.’ ”

“What folly!” sighed the little man. Van Moeulen kept on:—

“ ‘And when Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, Come up this once, for he hath showed me all his heart. Then the lords of the Philistines came up unto her and brought money in their hand.

“ And she made him sleep upon her knees, and she called for a man and caused him to shave off the seven locks of his head; and she began to afflict him, and his strength went from him.

“ And she said, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself. And he wist not that the Lord was departed from him.

“ But the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison house.”

“ O God! God!” wailed and wept the sick man. “ Be quiet!” said Van Moeulen, and read on:—

“ Howbeit the hair of his head began to grow again after he was shaven.

“ Then the lords of the Philistines gathered them together for to offer a great sacrifice unto Dagon their god, and to rejoice: for they said, Our God hath delivered Samson our enemy into our hand.

“ And when the people saw him, they praised their god: for they said, Our God hath delivered into our hands our enemy, and the destroyer of our country, which slew many of us.

“ And it came to pass, when their hearts were merry, that they said, Call for Samson, that he



may make us sport : and they called for Samson out of the prison house ; and he made them sport : and they set him between the pillars.

“ ‘ And Samson said unto the lad that held him by the hand, Suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereupon the house standeth, that I may lean upon them.

“ ‘ Now the house was full of men and women ; and all the lords of the Philistines were there ; and there were upon the roof about three thousand men and women, that beheld while Samson made sport.

“ ‘ And Samson called unto the Lord, and said, O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes.

“ ‘ And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up, of the one with his right hand, and of the other with his left.

“ ‘ And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with all his might ; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein. So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life.’ ”

At this little Samson opened his eyes spectrally wide, raised himself spasmodically, seized with

his slender arms the two pillars at the foot of his bed, and shook them, crying out in wrath, "Let me die with the Philistines!" The strong columns remained immovable ; but, exhausted and smiling sadly, the little man fell back on his pillow, while from his wound, the bandage of which was displaced, ran a red stream of blood.

# THE RABBI OF BACHARACH.

A FRAGMENT.

*With kindly greeting, the Legend of the Rabbi of Bacharach*  
IS DEDICATED  
*to his friend HENRY LAUBE by the AUTHOR.*



## CHAPTER I.

ON the Lower Rhine, where its banks begin to lose their smiling aspect, where hills and cliffs with romantic ruined castles rise more defiantly, and a wild and sterner dignity prevails, there lies, like a strange and fearful tale of the olden time, the gloomy and ancient town of Bacharach. But these walls, with their toothless battlements and turrets, in whose nooks and niches the winds blew and the sparrows rest, were not always so decayed and fallen, and in these poverty-stricken, repulsive muddy lanes which one sees through the ruined tower, there did not always reign that dreary silence which is only now and then broken by crying children, scolding women, and lowing cows. These walls were once proud and strong,

and these lanes were alive with a fresh, free life, power and pride, joy and sorrow, much love and much hate. For Bacharach of old belonged to those municipalities which were founded by the Romans during their rule on the Rhine;<sup>1</sup> and its inhabitants, though the times which came after were sadly stormy, and though they had to submit first to the Hohenstaufen, and then to the Wittelsbach authority, managed, after the example of the other cities on the Rhine, to maintain a tolerably free commonwealth. This consisted of an alliance of different social elements, in which the patrician elder citizens and those of the guilds which were subdivided according to their different trades, mutually strove for power, so that while they were bound in union to keep ward and guard against the robber-nobles, they nevertheless were obstinate in domestic dissensions waged for warring interests, the results of which were constant feuds, little social intercourse, much mistrust, and not seldom actual outbursts of passion. The lord warden<sup>2</sup> sat on the high tower of Sareck, and darted downwards like his falcon, whenever called for, swooping

<sup>1</sup> Bacharach is so called from *Ara Bacchi*, the altar of Bacchus, on account of the wine made there.

“ A jolly place it was in days of yore ;  
But something ails it now—the spot is cursed.”

<sup>2</sup> *Fogt*. Governor, warden, prefect, or provost.

also many a time uncalled. The clergy ruled in darkness by darkening the souls of others. One of the most distracted and helpless of bodies, gradually ground down by local laws, was the little Jewish community. This was first formed in Bacharach in the days of the Romans, and during the later persecution of the people it had taken in many a flock of fugitive co-religionists.

The great oppression of the Jews began with the crusades, and raged most furiously about the middle of the fourteenth century, at the end of the great pestilence, which was, like all other great public disasters, attributed to the Jews, because people declared they had drawn down the wrath of God, and with the help of the lepers had poisoned the wells. The enraged populace, especially the hordes of Flagellants, or half naked men and women, who, lashing themselves for penance and singing a mad hymn to the Virgin, swept over South Germany and the Rhenish provinces, murdered in those days many thousand Jews, torturing others, or baptizing them by force. There was another accusation which had come down from earlier times, and which through all the Middle Ages, even to the beginning of the last century, cost much blood and suffering. This was the ridiculous story, often repeated in chronicle and legend, that the Jews stole the consecrated wafer, and stabbed it through with knives till blood ran from it. And to this



it was added that at the feast of the Passover the Jews slew Christian children to use their blood in the night sacrifice.

Therefore on this festival the Jews, hated for their wealth, their religion, and the debts due to them, were entirely in the hands of their enemies, who could easily bring about their destruction by spreading the report of such a child-murder, and then secretly putting a bloody infant's corpse in the house of a Jew thus accused. Then there would be an attack by night on the Jews at their prayers, where there was murder, plunder, and baptism; and great miracles wrought by the dead child aforesaid, whom the Church eventually canonised. Saint Werner is one of these holy beings, and in his honour the magnificent abbey of Oberwesel was founded. It is now one of the most beautiful ruins on the Rhine, and which, with the Gothic grandeur of its long ogival windows, proudly high-shooting pillars, and marvellous stone-carving, so strangely enchants us when we wander by it on some gay, green summer's day, and do not know what was its origin. In honour of this saint three other great churches were built on the Rhine, and innumerable Jews murdered or maltreated. All this happened in the year 1287; and in Bacharach, where one of these Saint Werner's churches stood, the Jews suffered much misery and persecution. However, they remained for two centuries after, protected from

such attacks of popular rage, though they were continually subject to enmity and threatening.<sup>1</sup>

Yet the more hate oppressed them from without, the more earnestly and tenderly did the Jews of Bacharach cherish their domestic life within, and the deeper was the growth among them of piety and the fear of God. The ideal exemplar of a life given to God was seen in their Rabbi Abraham, who, though as yet a young man,

<sup>1</sup> Heine speaks here of the Middle Ages. What would he have said could he have foreseen that in the year 1889 a book would be published devoted to proving that Jews do sacrifice Christian children, and that this book would receive the approbation and sanction of the Pope? Since translating the foregoing passage, I have met with the following remarkable illustration of it in the *Levant Herald* :—

“A few days back two Greeks presented themselves at the palace of the grand rabbi of Smyrna; and asked to see him on very important business. The venerable Abraham Palacci being unwell, they were asked to come another day. Next day they called again; the rabbi not having yet recovered, his son, a man of forty-five, learning that the business was urgent, asked if they could not explain it to him. After some desultory conversation they consented, at the same time requesting to be conducted to some remote compartment where there was no danger of being overheard. This being done, one of them said to him :—‘Every one has his particular religion; we are aware that part of yours is to offer at Easter a Christian child in sacrifice; now we are ready, for the sum of £1400, to furnish you with a fine, plump, and healthy Christian child, a little Greek girl of four years old, for your sacrifice, and the child shall be obtained in such a manner as to insure the most profound secrecy.’ The rabbi’s son, as may be supposed, was thunderstruck at the proposal, but he dissembled his feelings and stated that before he could enter into any definite arrangements with

was famed far and wide for his learning. Born in Bacharach, his father, who had been the rabbi there before him, had charged him in his last will never to leave the place unless for fear of life. This command, and a cabinet full of rare books, was all which his parent, who lived in poverty and learning, left him. However, Rabbi Abraham was a very rich man, for he had married the only daughter of his paternal uncle, who had been a great dealer in jewellery, and whose

them it was necessary he should consult his father. They having consented to this, he withdrew to his father's room and briefly related to him the story of the grim proposal. Speaking in the Hebrew tongue, for fear the men outside should understand, the father told him to despatch a messenger immediately to the headquarters of the police, requesting the chief of police to send immediately an officer with a body of gendarmes, and then to go back and keep the Greeks, under the pretence of discussing the price of their crime. Emin Effendi speedily answered the summons, and on the arrival of the zaptiehs the rabbi posted them behind a door concealed by a heavy curtain, and sent word to his son that the men had come, this message, like the previous one, being delivered in Hebrew. One of these individuals asking what the man had said, Nissim Palacci answered that his father, although ill, wished to see them. Ushered into the presence of the rabbi, he began asking them in Turkish, so that the officials might understand the affair, how and where they got the child, how the sale was to be effected, and many other particulars. The examination of the case satisfactorily concluded, he whistled, the police came in, and, having manacled the men, led them off to prison. As they were led through the streets some inkling of the affair seems to have got abroad, and the police had to be strengthened to repress the people, who looked as if about to take vengeance on the miscreants."

possessions he had inherited. A few mischief-makers<sup>1</sup> in the community hinted now and then that the rabbi had married for money. But the women one and all denied this, declaring it was a well-known story that the rabbi, long ere he went to Spain, was in love with "Beautiful Sara," and how she waited for him seven years till he returned; he having already wedded her against the will of her father, and even her own inclination, by the betrothal-ring. For every Jew can make a Jewish girl his lawful wife, if he can put a ring on her finger, and say at the same time: "I take thee for my wife, according to the law of Moses and Israel." And when Spain was mentioned, the same gossips were wont to smile in the same significant manner, and all because of an obscure rumour that, though Rabbi Abraham had studied the holy law industriously enough at the high school of Toledo, yet that he had followed Christian customs and become imbued with habits of free thinking, like many Spanish Jews who had at that time attained a very remarkable degree of culture.

And yet in their hearts the tale-bearers put no faith in these reports; for ever since his return from Spain the daily life of the Rabbi had been to the last degree pure, pious, and earnest. He carried out the least details of all

<sup>1</sup> *Fuchsblärte*. Red-beards, Judases.

religious customs and ceremonies with painful conscientiousness; he fasted every Monday and Thursday—only on Sabbaths and feast days did he indulge in meat or wine; his time was passed in prayer and study; by day he taught the Law to the students, whom his fame had drawn to Bacharach, and by night he gazed on the stars in heaven, or into the eyes of the beautiful Sara. His married life was childless, yet there was no lack of life or gaiety in the household. The great hall in his home, which stood near the synagogue, was open to the whole community, so that people went and came from it without ceremony, some offering short prayers, others exchanging news, or taking mutual counsel when in trouble. Here the children played on Sabbath mornings while the weekly "section" was read; here many met for wedding or funeral processions, and quarrelled or were reconciled; here, too, those who were cold found a warm stove, and the hungry a well-spread table. And, moreover, the Rabbi had a multitude of relations, brothers and sisters, with their wives and children, as well as an endless array of uncles and cousins, in common with his wife, all of whom looked up to the Rabbi as the head of the family, and so made themselves at home in his house, and never failed to dine with him on all great festivals. Special among these grand gatherings



in the Rabbi's house was the annual celebration of the Passover, a very ancient and remarkable feast which Jews still hold every year in the month Nissen, in eternal remembrance of their deliverance from Egyptian captivity.

Which takes place as follows: As soon as it is dark the matron of the family lights the lamps, spreads the table-cloth, places in its midst three plates of unleavened bread, covers them with a napkin, and places on the pile six little dishes containing symbolical food, that is, an egg, lettuce, horse-radish, the bone of a lamb, and a brown mixture of raisins, cinnamon, and nuts. At this table the father of the family sits among relations and friends, and reads to them from a very curious book called the *Agade*, whose contents are a strange mixture of legends of their forefathers, wondrous tales of Egypt, questions of theology, prayers and festival songs. During this feast there is a grand supper, and even during the reading there is tasting of the symbolical food and nibbling of Passover bread, while four cups of red wine are drunk. Mournfully merry, seriously gay, and mysteriously secret as some dark old legend is the character of this nocturnal festival, and the usual traditional singing intonation with which the *Agade* is read by the father, and now and then re-echoed in chorus by the hearers, at one time thrills the inmost

soul as with a shudder, anon calms it as if it were a mother's lullaby, and anon startles it so suddenly into waking that even those Jews who have long fallen away from the faith of their fathers and run after strange joys and honours, are moved to their very hearts when by chance the old well-known tones of the Passover songs ring in their ears:

And so Rabbi Abraham once sat in his great hall surrounded by relations, disciples, and many other guests, to celebrate the great feast of the Passover. All around was unusually brilliant; over the table hung the gaily embroidered silk canopy, whose gold fringes touched the floor; the plate with the symbolic food shone in a comfortable home-like way, as did the tall wine goblets, adorned with embossed images of holy legends. The men sat in their black cloaks and black broad-brimmed hats, with white collars; the women, in wonderful glittering garments of Lombard stuffs, wore on their heads and necks ornaments of gold and pearls, and the silver Sabbath lamps poured forth their pleasant light on the pleased faces of parents and children, happy in their piety. On the purple velvet cushions of a chair, higher than the others, and reclining as the Law enjoins, sat Rabbi Abraham, and read and sang the *Agade*, while the mixed assembly joined with him, or answered in the

appointed places. The Rabbi also wore the appointed black festival garment, his nobly-formed but somewhat severe features wore a milder expression than usual, his lips smiled in the dark-brown beard as if they would fain tell something agreeable, while in his eyes there was an expression as of happy remembrances allied to some strange foreboding. The beautiful Sara, who sat on the same high velvet cushion as her husband, wore, as hostess, none of her ornaments—only white linen enveloped her slender form and good and gentle face. This face was touchingly beautiful, even as all Jewish beauty is of a peculiarly moving kind; for the consciousness of the deep wretchedness, the bitter scorn, and the evil chances amid which her kindred and friends dwelt, gave to her lovely features a depth of sorrow and an ever-watchful apprehension of love, such as most deeply touches our hearts. So on this evening the fair Sara sat looking into the eyes of her husband, yet glancing ever and anon at the beautiful parchment book of the *Agade* which lay before her, bound in gold and velvet. It was an old heirloom, with ancient wine stains on it, which had come down from the days of her grandfather, and in which were many boldly and brightly-coloured pictures, which she had often as a little girl looked at so eagerly on Passover evenings, and which represented all

kinds of Bible stories—how Abraham broke asunder with a hammer the idols of his father, how the angels came to him, how Moses slew Mizri, how Pharaoh sat in state on his throne, how the frogs gave him no peace even at table, how he—the Lord be praised!—was drowned, how the children of Israel went cautiously through the Red Sea; how they stood open-mouthed, with their sheep, cows, and oxen, before Mount Sinai; how pious King David played the harp; and, finally, how Jerusalem, with its towers and battlements, shone in the splendour of the setting sun.

The second wine-cup had been served, the faces and voices of the guests grew merrier, and the Rabbi, as he took a cake of unleavened bread and raised it, greeting gaily, read these words from the *Agade*: “See! This is the food which our fathers ate in Egypt! Let every one who is hungry come and enjoy it! Let every one who is sorrowful come and share the joys of our Passover! In this year we celebrate it here, but in years to come in the land of Israel. This year we celebrate it in servitude, but in the years to come as sons of freedom!”

Then the hall-door opened, and there entered two tall, pale men, wrapped in very broad cloaks, who said: “Peace be with you. We are men of your faith on a journey, and wish to share the Passover-feast with you!” And the Rabbi replied promptly

and kindly: "Peace be with you, sit ye down near me!" The two strangers sat down at the table, and the Rabbi read on. While the company conversed, he often cast a pleasant, petting word to his wife; and playing on the old saying that on this evening a Hebrew father of a family regards himself as a king, said to her, "Rejoice, oh my Queen!" But she replied, smiling sadly, "The Prince is wanting," meaning by that a son, who, as a passage in the *Agade* requires, shall ask his father, with a certain formula of words, what is the meaning of the festival? The Rabbi said nothing, but only pointed with his finger to a picture on the opened leaves of the *Agade*. It was quaintly and touchingly drawn, showing how the three angels came to Abraham, announcing that he would have a son by his wife Sara, who, meanwhile, urged by feminine curiosity, is listening slyly to it all behind the tent-door. This little sign caused a threefold blush to rise to the cheeks of beautiful Sara, who looked down, and then glanced pleasantly at her husband, who went on chanting the wonderful story how Rabbi Jesua, Rabbi Eliezer, Rabbi Asaria, Rabbi Akiba, and Rabbi Tarphen sat reclining in Bona-Brak, and conversed all night long of the Exodus from Egypt till their disciples came to tell them it was daylight, and that the great morning prayer was being read in the synagogue.



As Beautiful Sara listened with devotion while looking at her husband, she saw that in an instant his face assumed an expression as of agony or despair, his cheeks and lips were deadly pale, and his eyes glanced like balls of ice; but almost immediately he became calm and cheerful as before, his cheeks and lips grew ruddy, he looked about him gaily—nay, it seemed as if a mad and merry mood, such as was foreign to his nature, had seized him. Beautiful Sara was frightened as she had never been in all her life, and a cold shudder came over her—less from the momentary manifestation of dumb despair which she had seen in her husband's face, than from the joyousness which followed it, and which passed into rollicking jollity. The Rabbi cocked his cap comically, first on one ear, then on the other, pulled and twisted his beard funnily, sang the *Agade* texts like tavern-songs; and in the enumeration of the Egyptian plagues, where it is usual to dip the forefinger in the full wine-cup and cast the drops adhering to the earth, he sprinkled the young girls near him with the red wine, and there was great wailing over spoiled collars, and ringing laughter. At every instant Beautiful Sara became more awed at this convulsive merriment of her husband, and oppressed with nameless fears she gazed on the buzzing swarm of gaily glittering guests who comfortably

spread or rocked themselves here and there, nibbling the thin Passover cakes, drinking wine, gossiping, or singing aloud full of joy.

Then came the time for supper. All rose to wash, and beautiful Sara brought the great silver basin, richly adorned with embossed gold figures, which was presented to every guest, that he might wash his hands. As she held it to the Rabbi, he gave her a significant look, and quietly slipped out of the door. In obedience to the sign Beautiful Sara followed him, when he grasped her hand, and in the greatest haste hurried her through the dark lanes of Bacharach, out of the city gate to the highway which leads to Bingen along the Rhine.

It was one of the nights in spring which are indeed softly warm and starry withal, yet which inspire the soul with strange uncanny feelings. There was something of the churchyard in the flowers, the birds sang peevishly and as if vexing themselves, the moon cast spiteful yellow stripes of light over the dark stream as it went murmuring away, the lofty masses of the Rhine cliffs looked dimly like quivering giants' heads, the watchman on the tower of Castle Strahleck blew a melancholy tune, and with it rang in jarring rivalry the funeral bell of Saint Werner's. Beautiful Sara carried the silver ewer in her right hand, while the Rabbi grasped her left, and she felt that his fingers were ice-cold, and that his arm trembled ;

but still she went on with him in silence, perhaps because she was accustomed to obey blindly and unquestioning—perhaps, too, because her lips were mute with fear and anxiety.

Below Castle Sonneck, opposite Lorch, about the place where the hamlet of Nieder Rheinbach now stands, there rises a cliff which arches out over the Rhine bank. The Rabbi ascended it with his wife, looked around on every side, and gazed on the stars. Trembling and shivering, as with the pain of death, Beautiful Sara looked at his pale face, which seemed spectre-like in the moon-rays, and seemed to express by turns pain, terror, piety, and rage. But when the Rabbi suddenly snatched from her hands the silver ewer and threw it far away into the Rhine, she could no longer endure her agony of uncertainty, and crying out, "*Schadai*, full of mercy!" threw herself at his feet, and conjured him to solve the dark enigma.

Unable at first to speak from excitement, the Rabbi moved his lips without uttering a sound, till at last he cried, "Dost thou see the Angel of Death? There below he sweeps over Bacharach. But we have escaped his sword. Praised be God!" And in a voice still trembling with excitement he told her that while he was happily and comfortably singing the *Agade* he glanced by chance under the table, and saw at his feet the bloody

corpse of a little child. "Then I knew," continued the Rabbi, "that our two guests were not of the community of Israel, but of the assembly of the godless, who had plotted to bring that corpse craftily into the house so as to accuse us of child-murder, and stir up the people to plunder and murder us. Had I given a sign that I saw through that work of darkness I should simply have brought destruction on the instant to me and mine, and only by craft did I preserve our lives. Praised be God! Grieve not, Beautiful Sara. Our relations and friends will also be saved. It was only my blood which the wretches wanted. I have escaped them, and they will be satisfied with my silver and gold. Come with me, Beautiful Sara, to another land. We will leave bad luck behind us, and that it may not follow us I have thrown to it the silver ewer, the last of my possessions, as an offering. The God of our fathers will not forsake us. Come down, thou art weary. There is Dumb William standing by his boat; he will this morning row us up the Rhine."

Speechless, and as if every limb was broken, Beautiful Sara lay in the arms of the Rabbi, who slowly bore her to the bank. There stood William, a deaf and dumb youth, but yet beautiful as a picture, who, to maintain his old foster-mother, who was a neighbour of the Rabbi, was

a fisherman, and kept his boat in this place. It seemed as if he had divined the intention of Abraham, and was waiting for him, for on his silent lips there was an expression as of sweet sympathy and pity, and his great blue eyes rested as with deep meaning on Beautiful Sara, while he lifted her carefully into the canoe.<sup>1</sup>

The glance of the silent youth roused Beautiful Sara from her lethargy, and she realised at once that all which her husband had told her was no mere dream, and a stream of bitter tears poured over her cheeks, which were as white as her garment. So she rested in the canoe, a weeping image of white marble, while by her sat her husband and Silent William, who was rowing earnestly.

Whether it was owing to the measured beat of the oars, or the rocking of the boat, or the fresh perfume from the Rhine banks whereon joy grows,<sup>2</sup> it ever happens that even the most sorrowful being is marvellously calmed when on a night in spring he is lightly borne in a light canoe on the dear, clear Rhine stream. For in truth old, kind-hearted Father Rhine cannot bear that his children shall weep, so, calming their crying, he rocks them on his

<sup>1</sup> *Kahn*. The Rhine boats were almost invariably canoe-like in form, as many are at present.

<sup>2</sup> *Worauf die Freude wächst*. In allusion to the vineyards of the Rhine.



trusty arm, and tells them his most beautiful stories, and promises them his most golden treasures, perhaps the old, old, long-sunk Nibelungen hoard. Little by little the tears of Beautiful Sara ceased to flow; her worst sorrow seemed to be washed away by the eddying, whispering waves, while the hills about her home bade her the tenderest farewell. Most trustingly of all did the Kedrich, her favourite, give her a farewell greeting; and it seemed as if far up in the strange moonlight, resting on its summit, she saw a lady with outstretched arms, while the daring dwarfs swarmed out of their caverns in the rocks, and a rider came rushing down the rocks in full gallop. And Beautiful Sara felt as if she were a child again, sitting once more in the lap of her aunt from Lorch, who was telling her brave tales of the bold knight who freed the stolen damsel from the dwarfs, and many other true stories of the wonderful Wisperthal "over there," where the birds talk as sensibly as any mortals, and of Gingerbread Land, where good, obedient children go, and of enchanted princesses, singing trees, crystal castles, golden bridges, laughing water-fairies. . . . But all at once among these pleasant tales which began to send forth sounds of music and to gleam with lovely light, Beautiful Sara heard the voice of her father, who scolded the poor aunt for putting such nonsense into the

child's head. Then it seemed to her as if they set her on the little stool before her father's velvet-covered chair, who with a soft hand smoothed her long hair, and smiled as if well pleased, and cradled himself comfortably in his full, Sabbath dressing-gown of blue silk. Yes, it must be the Sabbath, for the flowered cover was spread on the table, all the utensils in the room shone polished like looking-glasses, the white-bearded public messenger<sup>1</sup> sat beside her father, and ate raisins and talked in Hebrew; even little Abraham came in with a very great book, and modestly begged leave of his uncle to expound a portion of the Holy Scripture, that he might prove that he had learned much during the past week, and therefore deserved much praise—and a corresponding quantity of cakes. . . . Then the lad laid the book on the broad arm of the chair, and set forth the history of Jacob and Rachel, and how Jacob lifted up his voice and wept when he first saw his cousin Rachel, how he talked so confidently with her by the well, how he had to serve seven years for her, and how speedily they passed away, and how he at last married and loved her for ever and ever. . . . Then all at once Beautiful Sara remembered how her father cried with merry voice, "Wilt thou not, like that also, marry thy

<sup>1</sup> *Gemeindediener*. Lit., servant of the community.

cousin Sara?" To which little Abraham seriously replied, "That I will, and she shall wait seven years too." These memories stole like twilight shadows through the soul of the young wife, and she saw how she and her little cousin—now so great a man and her husband—played like children together in the leafy tabernacle; how they were delighted with the gay carpets, flowers, mirrors, and gilded apples; how little Abraham petted her more tenderly, till he grew to be little by little larger and less amiable, and at last of full growth and altogether grim. . . . And now she sits in her room alone of a Saturday evening; the moon shines brightly in, and the door flies open, and cousin Abraham, in travelling garb and pale as death, comes in, and grasps her hand and puts a gold ring on her finger, and says solemnly, "I hereby take thee to be my wife, according to the laws of God and of Israel." "But now," he added, with a trembling voice, "now I must go to Spain. Farewell—for seven years thou must wait for me." So he hurried away, and Sara, weeping, told the tale to her father, who roared and raged. "Cut off thy hair, for now thou art a married woman," and he rode after Abraham to compel him to give her a letter of divorcement; but he was over the hills and far away, and the father returned silently to his house. And when Beautiful Sara

helped to draw off his boots, and to soothe him said that Abraham would return in seven years, he cursed and cried, "Seven years shalt thou be a beggar," and so he soon died.

And so old memories swept through her soul like a hurried play of shadows, the images intermixing and blending strangely, while between them went and came unknown bearded faces, and great flowers with marvellous broad spreading foliage.<sup>1</sup> Then the Rhine seemed to murmur the melodies of the *Agade*, and from its waters the pictures, large as life and in strange exaggerated guise, came forth one by one. There was the forefather Abraham painfully and hurriedly breaking the idols, who were hastily running out of his way; Mizri defending himself fiercely against the maddened Moses; Mount Sinai flashing and flaming; King Pharaoh swimming in the Red Sea, holding his zigzagged gold crown tight in his teeth, frogs with men's faces swimming in between, and the waves foaming and roaring, while a dark giant-hand rose threatening from the deep.<sup>2</sup>

That was the Mouse Tower of Bishop Hatto,

<sup>1</sup> *Grosse Blumen mit fabelhaft breitem Blattwerk.* The whole spirit of Gothic decoration, of grotesque figures and faces, twined about with vines and *crochets*, or expanded leaves exaggerated into strange yet beautiful forms, is given in this passage.

<sup>2</sup> According to magicians and occultists the most awful and terrible apparition which threatens the neophyte in his first introduction to the supernatural world is the giant foot or hand. This one was probably suggested by the romance of King Arthur.

and the canoe shot through the Binger Eddy. By this Beautiful Sara was somewhat aroused from her dreams, and gazed at the hills on the shore, from whose summits the lights gleamed, and at whose feet the mist shimmering in moon-rays began to rise. Suddenly she seemed to see in it her friends and relations, as they, with corpse-like faces and flowing shrouds, passed in awful procession along the Rhine. . . . All grew dark before her eyes, an icy current ran through her soul, and, as if in sleep, she only heard the Rabbi repeating the night-prayer slowly and painfully, as if at a deathbed, and dreamily she stammered the words, "Ten thousand to the right, ten thousand to the left, to protect the king from the terrors of the night."

Then all at once the oppressive gloom and grief passed away, the dark curtain was torn from heaven, and there appeared far above the holy city Jerusalem, with its towers and gates; the Temple gleamed in golden splendour, and in its fore-court Sara saw her father in his yellow Sabbath dressing-gown, smiling as if well pleased. All her friends and relations looked out from the round windows of the Temple, merrily greeting her; in the Holy of Holies knelt pious King David, in his purple mantle and golden crown; sweetly rang his song and harp-tones, and smiling happily Beautiful Sara awoke.



## CHAPTER II.

As Beautiful Sara opened her eyes they were almost dazzled by the rays of the sun. The high towers of a great city rose before her, and Silent William stood with his boat-hook upright in the canoe, and pushed and guided it through the lively crowding of many vessels, gay with pennons and streamers, whose crews either looked leisurely at passers-by or were in groups busied in loading with chests, bales, and casks the lighters which should bear them to the shore, and with it all was a deafening noise, the constant halloh cry of steersmen, the calling of traders from the shore, and the scolding of the custom-house officials who, in their red coats with white maces and white faces, jumped from boat to boat.

“Yes, Beautiful Sara,” said the Rabbi, cheerfully smiling to his wife, “this is the famous, free, imperial, and commercial city of Frankfort-on-the-Main, and we are now passing along that river. Do you see those pleasant-looking houses up there, surrounded by green hillocks? That is Sachsenhausen, from which our lame Gumpert brings us the fine myrrhen for the Feast of the Tabernacles. Here thou see’st the strong Main Bridge, with thirteen arches, over which many men, waggons, and horses safely pass, and in the middle stands a little house of which Aunty

Täubchen says that a baptized Jew lives there, who pays every man who brings him a dead rat six farthings, on account of the Jewish community, who are obliged to deliver annually to the State council five thousand rats' tails for tribute."

At the thought of this war, which the Frankfort Jews were obliged to keep up with the rats, Beautiful Sara burst out laughing. The bright sunlight, and the new gay world now before her, had driven all the terrors and horrors of the past night from her soul, and as she was lifted to land from the canoe by Silent William and her husband, she felt inspired as with a sense of joyful safety. But Silent William looked long with his beautiful deep blue eyes into hers, half sadly, half cheerfully, and then with a significant glance at the Rabbi, sprang back into his boat and disappeared.

"Silent William much resembles my brother who died," said Beautiful Sara. "All the angels are alike," answered the Rabbi; and taking his wife by the hand he led her through the dense crowd on the shore, where, as it was the time of the Easter Fair, stood a great number of newly-erected wooden booths. Then passing through the gloomy Main Gate, they found themselves in quite as noisy a multitude. Here in a narrow street one shop stood close by another, every house, as was usual in Frankfort, being specially adapted to trade. There were no windows on

the ground floor, but broad open arches, so that the passer-by, looking in, could see at a glance all there was for sale.<sup>1</sup> And how Beautiful Sara was astonished at the mass of magnificent wares, and the splendour, such as she had never seen before! Here stood Venetians,<sup>2</sup> who offered cheaply all the elegancies and luxuries of the East and Italy, and Beautiful Sara seemed as if enchanted by the ornaments and jewels, the gay and varied caps and bodices, the gold bangles and necklaces, and the whole display of knick-knackery which women look at so lovingly and wear even more endearingly. The richly embroidered stuffs of velvet and silk seemed to speak to Beautiful Sara, and flash and sparkle back strange wonders into her memory, and it really seemed to her as if she were again a little girl, and that Aunty Täubchen had kept her promise and taken her to the Frankfort Fair, and that she now at last stood before the beautiful garments of which she had heard so much. With a secret joy she reflected what she should take back with her to Bacharach, and which of her two little cousins, Flowery and Birdy, would prefer that blue silk

<sup>1</sup> Such houses still abound in Regensberg, Nuremberg, and the Italian cities.

<sup>2</sup> The Venetians (as may be seen in the *Facetiae* of Piovano Arlotto) at this time pushed their wares into Paris, London, and Germany with all the enterprise of our modern commercial travellers.

girdle, and whether the green stockings would suit little Gottschalk—when all at once it flashed on her, “Ah, Lord! they are all grown up now, and yesterday they were slain!” She shuddered and shrank into herself, and the shadows of the night seemed to settle again in her soul; but the gold-embroidered cloths glittered once more with a thousand roguish eyes, and drove dark thoughts from her mind, and as she looked into her husband’s face it was free from clouds, and bore its habitual serious gentleness. “Shut your eyes, Sara!” said the Rabbi, and led his wife away, still onward through the crowd.

What a varied, variegated, struggling multitude! First in it were the tradesmen, who loudly outbid one another in offering bargains, or talked together, summing on their fingers, or, followed by porters bearing high-packed loads, who at a dog-trot led the way to their lodgings. By the faces of others one could see that they came from curiosity. The stout councilman was shown by his scarlet cloak and golden chain, while the black, prosperous swelling waistcoat betrayed the honourable and proud Altburger. The iron-peaked helmet, the yellow leather jerkin, and the rattling spurs, weighing one pound, indicated the heavy cavalrman, or squire. Under many a little black velvet cap, which bowed in a point over the brow, there was a rosy girl-face, and the young fellows who

jumped after it, like hunting-dogs on the scent, showed they were finished dandies by their saucily feathered caps, their rattling peaked shoes, and their silk garments of separate colours, where one side was green and the other red, or the right striped like a rainbow, and the left in harlequin squares of many colours, so that the mad youths looked as if they were split in two. Freeing themselves from the crowd, the Rabbi with his wife directed the way to the Römer. This is the great market-place of the city, surrounded by houses with high gables, and takes its name from one immense building, "the Roman," which was bought by the magistracy and dedicated as the court-house or town-hall. In it the German Emperor was elected, and before it tournaments were often held. King Maximilian, who was passionately fond of such sports, was then in Frankfort, and in his honour the day before there had been great tilting in the Römer ground. Many idle men still stood on or about the scaffolding, which was being removed by carpenters, and told how the Duke of Brunswick and the Margrave of Brandenburg had charged one another amid the sound of drums and of trumpets, and how Lord Walter the Blackguard had knocked the Knight of the Bear so soundly out of his saddle that the splinters of the lances flew high in the air, and the tall blonde King Max, standing



upon the balcony among his courtiers, rubbed his hands for joy. The cloths of gold were still to be seen on the balconies and in the Gothic windows of the town-hall. The other houses of the market-place were also still bedecked and adorned with shields, especially the Limburg house, on whose banner was painted a maiden who bore a sparrow-hawk on her hand, while a monkey held out to her a mirror. Many knights and ladies stood on the balcony engaged in gay conversation, while looking at the crowd below, which, in odd groups and as odd attire, shifted here and there. What a multitude of idlers and loiterers crowded together here to gratify curiosity! There was laughing, grumbling, stealing, naughty pinching, hurraing, while ever and anon was heard in yelling, braying notes the trumpet of the mountebank quack, who, in a red cloak with his Jack Pudding and monkey, stood on a high stand blowing bravely the horn of his own skill, and sounding the praises of his tinctures and marvellous salves, ere he solemnly regarded the glass of water brought by some old woman, or applied himself to pull a poor peasant's tooth. Two fencing-masters, fluttering about in gay ribbons, brandishing their rapiers, met as if by chance, and had a mock duel, with great apparent anger; but after a long assault-at-arms each declared that the other was invincible, and took up a

collection. Then the newly-organised guild of archers marched by with drummers and pipers, and these were followed by the policeman,<sup>1</sup> who carried a red flag, and led a disorderly mob of travelling adventuresses, who came from the woman's house, known as "the Ass," in Würzburg, and were going to Rosendale, where the highly honourable municipal authority had assigned them their quarters for the fair. "Shut your eyes, Sara," said the Rabbi. For indeed the fantastic crowd of very lightly clad girls, among whom were some who were really beautiful, behaved in a most unbecoming manner, baring their bold white breasts, chaffing those who went by with shameless words, and swinging their long travelling staves. And as they came to the gate of Saint Katherine they rode on them as children play at riding horses, and sang in shrill tones the witch-song—

"Where is the goat? the hellish beast;  
Where is the goat? Oh bring him quick!  
And if there is no goat, at least  
We'll ride upon the stick."

This wild sing-song, which rang afar, was lost in the long-drawn solemn tones of a church procession. It was a mournful train of bare-headed and bare-footed monks, who carried burning wax tapers, banners with pictures of the saints, and

<sup>1</sup> *Stöcker*. Constable in charge of the stocks, &c.

great silver crucifixes. Before it ran boys clad in red and white gowns, bearing smoking censers of frankincense. In the midst, under a splendid canopy, were priests in white robes, bedecked with costly lace or in many-coloured stoles, and one of them held in his hand a sun-like golden vessel, which on arriving at a shrine by the market-corner he raised on high, while he half-sang, half-spoke in Latin—when all at once a little bell rang, and all around becoming silent fell on their knees and made the sign of the Cross. “Shut your eyes, Sara!” cried the Rabbi again, and hastily drew her away through a labyrinth of narrow and crooked streets, and at last over the desolate empty place which separated the new Jewish quarter from the rest of the city.

Before that time the Jews dwelt between the Dom or Cathedral and the bank of the Main, that is, from the bridge to the Lumpenbrunnen or Rag-fountain, and from the Mehlwege as far as Saint Bartholomew’s. But the Catholic priests obtained a Papal bull forbidding the Jews to live so near the high church, for which reason the magistrates assigned them a place on the Wollgraben, where they built their present quarter. This was surrounded with high walls, and had iron chains before the gate to shut them in from the mob. Here they lived, crowded and oppressed, and with far more vivid memories of previous suffering than

at present. In 1240 the raging populace had caused an awful "bath of blood" among them, which was remembered as the first Jewish massacre; and in 1349, when the Flagellants, while passing through the town, set fire to it, and accused the Jews of the deed: the latter were nearly all murdered or burned alive in their own houses. This was called the second Jewish massacre. After this the Jews were oftener threatened with similar slaughter, and during the internal dissensions of Frankfort, especially during a dispute of the council with the guilds, the mob often meant to attack the Jewish quarter. This place had two doors, which on Catholic festivals were closed from without and on Jewish celebrations from within, and before each gate was a watch-house with city soldiers.

As the Rabbi came with his wife to the entrance to the Jewish quarter, the soldiers lay, as one could see through the open windows, on the wooden bench of their guard-room, while out before the door sat the drummer playing small caprices on his great drum. He was a powerfully built, heavy fellow, wearing a jerkin and hose of fiery yellow, greatly puffed out on the arms and thighs, and profusely scattered with small red flowing tufts sewed on, which looked as if innumerable fiery tongues were licking him from head to foot. His breast and back were

covered with cushions of black cloth, against which hung his drum ; he bore on his head a flat, round black cap, which was matched by his face in roundness and flatness, and which was in keeping with his dress, being also orange-yellow, picked out with black pimples, and contracted into a gaping smile. So the fellow sat and drummed the air of a song which the Flagellants had sung at the Jewish massacre, while he sang, in a rough, beery voice—

“ Our dear Lady true  
Walked in the morning dew,  
Kyrie eleison ! ”

“ Hans, that is a terrible tune,” cried a voice from behind the closed gate of the Jewish quarter. “ Yes, Hans, and a bad song too—don’t suit the drum ; don’t suit at all—by my soul—not the fair on Easter morning—bad song—dangerous, Jack, Jacky, little drum-Jacky boy<sup>1</sup>—I’m a lonely man—and if thou lovest me, the Star, the tall Star, the tall nose-Star—so stop it ! ”

These words were forced out in fragments by the unseen speaker, now as in hasty anxiety, anon in a sighing drawl, with a tone which alternated from softness to harsh hoarseness, such as one hears in consumptive people. The drummer was not moved, and continued his song—

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<sup>1</sup> *Hans-Hänschen, klein Trommelhänschen.*



“There came a little youth,  
His beard had run away, in truth,  
Halleluja!

“Jack,” again cried the voice of the invisible speaker, “Jack, I’m a lone man, and it is a dangerous song, and I don’t like it; and I have my reasons for it, and if you love me sing something else, and to-morrow we will drink together.”

At the word “drink” Jack ceased his drumming and singing, and said in gentler tone, “The devil take the Jews! but thou, dear Nose-Star,<sup>1</sup> art my friend, I protect thee; and if we should only drink together often enough I will convert thee. Yea, I will be thy godfather, and when baptized thou wilt be eternally happy; and if thou hast genius and wilt study industriously under me thou mayest even become a drummer. Yes, Nose-Star, thou mayest yet become something great. I will drum the whole catechism into thee when we drink to-morrow together; but now open the gate, for here are two strangers who wish to enter.”

“Open the gate!” cried Nose-Star, and his voice almost deserted him. “That can’t be done in such a hurry, my dear Jack; one can’t tell—don’t know, you know—and I’m a lone man. Veitel Oxhead has the key, and he is sitting now in the corner mumbling his eighteen-prayer,

<sup>1</sup> *Nasenstern*. *Stern* is a common Jewish name.

and he must not be interrupted. And Jäkel the Fool is here too, but he is busy; I'm a lone man."

"The devil take the Jews!" cried the drummer, and laughing loudly at this, his own and only joke, he trundled himself to the guard-room and laid down on the bench.

While the Rabbi waited with his wife before the great locked gate, there rose from behind it a strangely ringing, nasal, and somewhat mocking slow voice. "Starry—don't drone and groan so long. Take the keys from Oxheady's coat pockets, or else go stick your nose in the keyhole, and so unlock the gate. The people have been standing and waiting a long time."

"People!" cried the voice of Nose Star, as if frightened. "I thought there was only one; and I beg you, Fool—dear Jäkel Fool—look out and see who are there."

A small, well-grated window in the gate opened, and there appeared in it a yellow cap with two horns, and the drolly, wrinkled, and twisted jest-maker's face of Jäkel the Fool. At once the window was shut, and he cried angrily, "Open the gate—there is only a man and a woman."

"A man and a wo-man!" groaned Nose Star. "Yes, and when the gate's opened the woman will take her gown off, and become a man; and there'll be two men, and we are only three!"

“Don't be a hare,” replied Jäkel the Fool. “Pick up your heart and show courage!”

“Courage!” cried Nose Star, with mournful bitterness. “Hare! Hare is a bad comparison. The hare is an unclean beast. Courage! I am not put here to be courageous, but cautious. When too many come I am to call. But I alone cannot keep them back. My arm is weak, I have an issue-sore, and I'm a lone man. Should one shoot me I should be slain. Then that rich man, Mendel Reiss, will sit on the Sabbath at his table, and wipe the raisin-sauce from his mouth, and rub his belly, and perhaps say, “Tall Nose Star was a brave fellow after all; if it had not been for him perhaps they would have burst the gate. He let himself be shot dead for us. He was a brave fellow; pity that he's dead!”

Here the voice became tender and tearful, but all at once it rose to a hasty and almost angry tone. “Courage! and because the rich Mendel Reiss wipes away the raisin-sauce from his mouth, and pats his belly, and calls me a brave fellow, I'm to let myself be shot dead! Courage! Be brave! Little Strauss was brave, and yesterday went to the Römer to see the tilting, and thought they would not know him because he wore a frock of violet velvet—three florins a yard—with fox-tails all embroidered with gold—quite magnificent; and they dusted his violet frock

for him till it lost its colour, and his own back became violet and did not look human. Courage, indeed! The crooked, crippled Leser was courageous, and called our blackguardly chief magistrate a blackguard, and they hung him up by the feet between two dogs while Jack drummed. Courage! Don't be a hare! Among many dogs the hare is killed. I'm a lone man, and I am really afraid."

"That I'll swear to," cried Jäkel.

"Yes; I *have* fear," replied Nose Star, sighing. "I know that it runs in my blood, and I had it from my mother"——

"Ay, ay," interrupted Jäkel, "and your mother had it from her father, and he from his, and so all thy ancestors one from the other, back to the forefather who marched with King Saul against the Philistines, and was the first to run away. But look! Oxheady is all ready—he has bowed his head for the fourth time; now he is jumping like a flea at the Holy, Holy, Holy, and seeking cautiously in his pocket."

In fact the keys rattled, the gate grated and creaked as it opened, and the Rabbi and his wife entered the empty Judengasse or Jews' Lane. The man who opened was a little fellow with a good-natured grim face, who nodded absently, like one who did not like to be disturbed in his thoughts, and when he had carefully closed the portal,

slipped without saying a word into a corner, murmuring his prayers. Less taciturn was Jäkel the Fool, a short fellow with curved legs, a full blooming, red, and laughing face, and an enormous leg-of-mutton hand, which he stretched out of the wide sleeve of his chequered jacket in welcome. Behind him a tall, lean figure showed or rather hid itself—the slender neck white feathered with a fine cambric ruff, and the thin pale face strangely adorned with an incredibly long nose, which anxiously peered about in every direction.

“God’s welcome to a pleasant feast-day!” cried Jäkel the Fool. “Do not be astonished that the lane is so empty and silent just now. All our people are in the synagogue, and you are come just in the right time to hear the history of the sacrifice of Isaac. I know it—’tis an interesting tale, and if I had not heard it before, thirty-three times, I would willingly hear it again this year. And—mind you!—’tis an important history, for if Abraham had really killed Isaac and not the goat, then there would have been more goats in the world now—and fewer Jews.” And then, with mad and merry grimaces, Jäkel began to sing the following song from the Agade:<sup>1</sup>—

<sup>1</sup> This prototype of “The House that Jack Built” is presumed to be a hymn in Seder Hagadah, fol. 23. The historical interpretation, says Mrs. Valentine, who has reproduced it in her Nursery Rhymes, was first given by P. N. Leberecht at Leipsic in 1731, and is printed in the *Christian Reformer*, vol. xvii.



“A kid, a kid, which my father bought for two pieces of money.<sup>1</sup> A kid! a kid!

“There came a cat which ate the kid, which my father bought for two pieces of money. A kid!

“There came a dog, who bit the cat, who ate the kid, which my father bought for two pieces of money. A kid!

“There came a stick, which beat the dog, who bit the cat, who ate the kid, which my father bought for two pieces of money. A kid! A kid!

“There came a fire, which burnt the stick, which beat the dog, who bit the cat, who ate the kid, which my father bought for two pieces of money. A kid! A kid!

“There came the water, which quenched the fire, which burnt the stick, which beat the dog, who

p. 28. The original is in Chaldee. It is throughout an allegory. The kid, one of the pure animals, denotes Israel. The Father by whom it was purchased is Jehovah; the two pieces of money signify Moses and Aaron. The cat means the Assyrians, the dog the Babylonians, the staff the Persians, the fire the Grecian Empire under Alexander the Great. The water betokens the Roman or the fourth of the great monarchies to whose dominion the Jews were subjected. The ox is a symbol of the Saracens, who subdued Palestine; the butcher that killed the ox denotes the crusaders by whom the Holy Land was taken from the Saracens; the Angel of Death the Turkish power to which Palestine is still subject. The tenth stanza is designed to show that God will take signal vengeance on the Turks, and restore the Jews to their own land.

<sup>1</sup> *Suslein*. In Heine's version, every noun in this song assumes the diminutive *lein*, as *Vaterlein*, “little father,” *Bocklein*. *Hundlein*, &c.

bit the cat, who ate the kid, which my father bought for two pieces of money. A kid! A kid!

"There came an ox, who drank the water, which quenched the fire, which burnt the stick, which beat the dog, who bit the cat, who ate the kid, which my father bought for two pieces of money. A kid! A kid!

"There came the butcher,<sup>1</sup> who slew the ox, who drank the water, which quenched the fire, which burnt the stick, which beat the dog, who bit the cat, that ate the kid, which my father bought for two pieces of money. A kid! A kid!

"Then came the Angel of Death,<sup>2</sup> who slew the butcher, who killed the ox, who drank the water, which quenched the fire, which burnt the stick, which beat the dog, who bit the cat, who ate the kid, which my father bought for two pieces of money. A kid! kid!"<sup>3</sup>

"Yes, beautiful lady," added the singer, "and the day will come when the Angel of Death

<sup>1</sup> *Schochet*, butcher, meaning the Crusaders. Jews in repeating this in English or German retain this Hebrew word.

<sup>2</sup> *Malach Hammowes*, the Angel of Death. This is also generally given in Hebrew. There is a great awe attached to the name which gives a peculiar dignity to this verse.—*Translator*.

<sup>3</sup> There is a concluding verse which Heine has omitted. "Then came the Holy One of Israel—blessed be he—and slew the Angel of Death, who," &c. Heine goes *usque ad aras*, but no further.—*Translator*.

will slay the slayer, and all our blood come over Edom, for God is a God of vengeance."

But all at once, casting aside with violent effort the seriousness into which he had unconsciously fallen, Jäkel jumped again into his mad fancies, and kept on in his harsh jester tones, "Don't be afraid, beautiful lady, Nose Star will not harm you. He is only dangerous to the old Schnapper-Elle. She has fallen in love with his nose—and, faith! it deserves it. Yea, for it is beautiful as the tower which looketh forth towards Damascus, and riseth like a cedar of Lebanon. Outwardly it gleameth like gold leaf and syrup, and inwardly it is all music and loveliness. It bloometh in summer and in winter it is frozen up—but in summer and winter it is petted and pulled by the white hands of Schnapper-Elle. Yes, she is madly in love with him. She cuddles him, she fuddles and foddors him; for her age he is young enough. When he is fat enough she means to marry him; and whoever comes to Frankfort, three hundred years hence, will not be able to see the heavens for Nose Stars."

"Ah, you are Jäkel the Fool," exclaimed the Rabbi, laughing. "I mark it by your words. I have often heard of you."

"Yes—yes," replied Jäkel, with a comical air of modesty. "Yes, that comes of being famous.

A man is often celebrated far and wide for being a bigger fool than he has any idea of. However, I take great pains and do my very best to be a fool, and jump and shake myself to make the bells ring; other people manage it more easily. But tell me, Rabbi, why do ye journey on a feast-day?"

"My justification," replied the Rabbi, "is in the Talmud, and it says, 'Danger drives away the Sabbath.'"

"Danger!" screamed the tall Nose Star, with an air of deadly terror. "Danger! danger! Drummer Jack!—drum, drum. Danger! danger! Drummer Jack!"

From without resounded the deep beery voice of Drummer Jack, "*Tausend donner sacrament!* The devil take the Jews. That's the third time to-day that you've woke me out of a sound sleep, Nose Star! Don't make me mad! For when I am mad I'm the howling old devil himself; and then as sure as I'm a Christian I'll up with my gun and shoot slap through the grated window of your tower—and then it'll be, old fellow, everybody look out for his nose!"

"Don't shoot! don't shoot! I'm a lonely man," wailed Nose Star piteously, and pressed his face against the wall, and remained trembling and murmuring prayers in this position.

"But say, what has happened?" cried Jäkel

the Fool, with all the impatient curiosity which was even then characteristic of the Frankfort Jews.

But the Rabbi impatiently broke loose from them, and went his way along the Jews' Street. "See, Sara!" he exclaimed, "how badly guarded is our Israel. False friends guard its gates without, and within its watchers are folly and fear."

They wandered slowly through the long and empty streets, where only here and there the head of some bright young girl looked out of a window, while the sun mirrored itself in the brilliant panes. In those days the houses in the Jewish quarter were still neat and new, and much lower than they now are, since it was only at a later time that the Jews, as their number greatly increased, although they could not enlarge their quarter, built one storey over another, squeezed themselves together like sardines, and so cramped themselves both in body and soul.<sup>1</sup> That part of the Jewish quarter which remained after the great fire, and which is called the Old Lane—that series of high, grimly dark houses, where a strangely grimacing, damp race of people bargains and chaffers, is a horrible relic of the Middle Ages. The older synagogue exists no

<sup>1</sup> It is remarkable that in America a narrow-minded, mean man is called a sardine. "A man who has never travelled, and has all his life been packed tightly among those who were his equals in ignorance and inexperience, is therefore called a sardine" (*The Breitmann Ballads*).



more; it was less capacious than the present one, built later, after the Nuremberger exiles came into the community. It lay more to the north. The Rabbi had no need to ask his way. He found it from afar by the buzz of many voices often raised aloud. In the court of the House of God he parted from his wife, and after washing his hands at the fountain there, entered the lower part of the synagogue where the men pray, while Sara went up a flight of stairs and came into the place reserved for women.

This upper portion was a kind of gallery with three rows of seats painted of a reddish brown, whose backs were fitted in a manner very convenient for placing the prayer-books, with a hanging board. Here the women sat gossiping together or standing up in deep prayer. However, they often went and peered with curiosity through the large grating which was on the eastern side, through the thin green lattice of which one could look down into the lower portion of the synagogue. There, behind high praying-desks, stood the men in their black cloaks, their pointed beards shooting out over white ruffs, and their skull-capped heads more or less concealed by a four-cornered scarf of white wool or silk, furnished with the prescribed tassels, in some instances also adorned with gold lace. The walls of the synagogue were simply white-washed, and no

other ornament was to be seen except the gilded iron grating on the square stage, where the extracts from the Law were recited, and the holy coffer, a costly embossed chest, apparently upheld by marble columns with rich capitols, whose flower and leaf-work flourished charmingly, covered with a curtain of violet velvet, on which a pious inscription was worked in gold spangles, pearls, and many-coloured gems. Here hung the silver memorial-lamp, and there also rose a barred dais, on whose crossed iron bars were all kinds of sacred utensils, among the rest the seven-branched candlestick; while before it, his countenance towards the chest, stood the choir-leader or chief singer, whose song was accompanied as if instrumentally by the voices of his two assistants, the bass and soprano. The Jews have forbidden all instrumental music to be used in their Church, thinking that hymns to God are more true in spirit or edifying when they rise from the glowing breast of man, than from the cold pipes of an organ. Beautiful Sara was charmed like any child when the chief singer, an admirable tenor, raised his voice, and the ancient, deep, and solemn melodies which she knew so well bloomed forth in a fresher loveliness than she had ever dreamed of, while the bass murmured in harmony the deep dark notes, while in the pauses the soprano trilled sweetly.

and daintily. Such singing Beautiful Sara had never heard in the synagogue of Bacharach, where the public superintendent, David Levi, was the leader; and when this elderly trembling man, with his broken baa-ing voice, would try to trill like a girl, and in his desperate effort to do so shook his weak and drooping arm feverishly, it rather inspired laughter than devotion.

A something of devotedness, not unmingled with feminine curiosity, drew Beautiful Sara to the grating, where she could look down into the lower division, or the so-called men's school. She had never before seen so many of her faith together, and it cheered her heart to be in such a multitude of those so nearly allied by race, thought, and sufferings. And her soul was still more deeply moved when three old men reverentially approached the sacred repository, unlocked the chest, drew aside the glittering curtain, and very carefully brought forth the Book which God once wrote with His own hand, and to maintain which the Jews have suffered so much—so much misery and hate, disgrace and death—a thousand years' martyrdom. This Book—a great roll of parchment—was wrapped like a princely child in a gaily embroidered scarlet velvet cloak; above, on both the wooden rollers, were two little silver shrines, in which many pomegranates and small bells moved and rang prettily, while before,

on a silver chain, hung gold shields with many coloured gems. The chief singer took the Book, and, as if it had been really a child—a child for whom one has greatly suffered, and whom we love all the more on that account—he rocked it in his arms, skipped with it here and there, pressed it to his breast, and, like one inspired by a holy touch, broke forth into such a devout hymn of praise and thanksgiving that it seemed to Beautiful Sara as if the pillars of the holy shrine began to bloom, and the strange and lovely blossoms and leaves of the capitols shot ever higher, and the notes of the treble were changed to nightingales, while the arch of the synagogue was shattered by the tremendous tones of the bass singer, and the joy and splendour of GOD gleamed down and through from the blue heavens. Yes, it was a beautiful psalm. The congregation sang over as in chorus the concluding verse, and the chief singer walked slowly to the raised platform in the middle of the synagogue bearing the holy Book, while men and boys crowded hastily about him to kiss its velvet covering or even to touch it. When on the platform, the velvet cover as well as the wrappings covered with illuminated letters were removed, and the chief singer, in the peculiar intonation which in the Passover service is still more peculiarly sounded, read the edifying narrative of the temptation of Abraham.

Beautiful Sara had modestly withdrawn from the grating, and a stout, much ornamented woman of middle age, with a self-asserting, forward, good-natured aspect, had with a nod allowed her to read in company in her prayer-book. This lady was evidently no great scholar, for as she read with a murmuring voice the prayers as the women do, not being allowed to take part in the singing, Sara observed that she made the best she could of many words, and omitted not a few good passages altogether. But after a while the watery blue eyes of the good woman were languidly raised, an insipid smile gleamed over her red and white china-ware face, and in a voice which she strove to make as genteel as possible, she said to Beautiful Sara, "He sings very well. But I have heard far better singing in Holland. You are a stranger, and perhaps do not know that the chief singer is from Worms, and that they will keep him here if he will be content with four hundred florins a year. He is a charming man, and his hands are as white as alabaster. I think a great deal of a handsome hand; it makes one altogether handsome"—saying which, the good lady laid her own hand, which was really a fine one, on the shelf before her, and with a polite bow which intimated that she did not care to be interrupted while speaking, she added, "The little singer is



a mere child, and looks very much worn out. The basso is too ugly for anything, and our Star once said—it was very witty of him—‘The bass singer is a bigger fool than even a basso is expected to be!’ All three eat in my restaurant—perhaps you don’t know that I’m Elle Schnapper?”

Beautiful Sara expressed her thanks for the information, when Schnapper Elle proceeded to narrate in detail how she had once been in Amsterdam, how she had been subjected to base designs on account of her remarkable beauty, how she had come to Frankfort three days before Pentecost and married Schnapper, how he had passed away, and what touching things he had said on his deathbed, and how hard it was to carry on the business of a cook-shop and keep one’s hands nice. Several times she glanced aside with contemptuous looks, apparently directed at some giggling girls, who were apparently quizzing her clothes. Truly this dress was remarkable enough—a very much puffed gown of white satin, on which all the animals of Noah’s Ark were embroidered in gaudy colours; a jacket of cloth of gold like a cuirass, the sleeves of red velvet, yellow slashed; an immensely high cap on her head, with a mighty ruff of stiff white linen round her neck, which also bore a silver chain, to which hung all kinds of coins, cameos,

and curiosities, chief among which was a great image of the city of Amsterdam, which rested on her bosom.<sup>1</sup>

But the dresses of the other women were not less remarkable. They consisted of a medley of fashions of different ages, and many a little woman there was so covered with gold and diamonds as to look like a wandering jeweller's shop. It is true that there was a fashion of dress prescribed by law to the Frankfort Jews, and to distinguish them from Christians the men must wear yellow rings on their cloaks, while the women bore very high standing, blue striped veils on their caps. However, in the Jewish quarter these laws were little looked after, and there, especially on Sundays, and in the synagogue, the women put on as much magnificent apparel as they could—partly to be envied of others, and partly to advertise the wealth and standing of their husbands.

Meanwhile, as passages from the laws of Moses were being read from the Book of Moses, the devotion somewhat lulled. Many made themselves comfortable and sat down, whispering perhaps business affairs with a friend, or went

<sup>1</sup> These eccentric ornaments, representing cities, sea-fights, men on horseback, &c., may be seen occasionally in curiosity shops and museums. They are sometimes very large indeed, and few would imagine that they were intended for personal decoration.

out into the court to get a little fresh air. Small boys took the liberty of visiting their mothers in the women's apartment; and here worship was still more loosely observed, as there was gossiping, cluttering together or laughing, while, as will always happen, the young quizzed the elder, while the latter blamed the light-headedness of the girls and the general degeneracy of the age. And just as there was a chief singer in the place below, so was there a head-cackler and gossip in the one above. This was Puppy Reiss,<sup>1</sup> a shallow, buxom woman, who had an inkling of every trouble, and always had a scandal on her tongue. The usual butt of her pointed sayings was the poor Schnapper Elle, and she could mock right well the affected genteel airs and languishing manner with which the latter accepted the mocking compliments of young men.

"Do you know," cried Puppy Reiss, "that Schnapper Elle said yesterday, 'If I were not beautiful and clever, and beloved, I had rather not live.'"

Then there was a loud tittering, and Schnapper Elle, who was not far distant, noting that this was all at her expense, lifted her nose in scorn, and sailed away like a proud galley to some further place. Then Birdie Ochs, a plump and somewhat awkward lady, remarked compassionately that

<sup>1</sup> Hündchen Reiss.

Schnapper Elle might be a little vain and small of mind, but that she was an honest, generous soul, and did much good to many folk in need.

"Particularly to Nose Star," snapped Puppy Reiss. And all who knew of this tender tie laughed all the louder.

"Don't you know," added Puppy spitefully, "that Nose Star now sleeps in Schnapper Elle's house! But just look at Susy Flörsheim down there, wearing the necklace which Daniel Fläsch pawned to her husband! Fläsch's wife is vexed at it—*that* is plain. And now she is talking to Mrs. Flörsheim. *How* amiably they shake hands!—and hate one another like Midian and Moab! How sweetly they smile on one another! Oh, you dear souls, *don't* eat one another up out of pure tenderness! I'll just steal up and listen to them!"

And so, like a sneaking wild cat, Puppy Reiss stole along and heard the two women mutually bewailing to one another how they had worked all the past week to clean up the house and scour the kitchen things, and all they had to do before Passover, so that not a crumb of leavened bread stuck to anything. And such troubles as they had baking the unleavened bread! Mrs. Fläsch had bitter griefs over this—for she had no end of trouble over it in the public bakery, for according to the ticket which she drew she

could not bake there till the afternoon of the very last day, just before Passover Eve; and then old Hannah had kneaded the dough badly, and the maids had rolled it too thin, and half of it was scorched in baking, and worst of all, rain came pouring through the bake-house roof, and so wet and weary they had to work till late in the night.

"And, my dear Mrs. Flörsheim," said Mrs. Fläsch, with gracious friendliness most insincere, "you were a little to blame for that, because you did not send your people to help me in baking."

"Ah! pardon," replied the other. "My servants were so busy—the goods for the fair had to be packed—my husband"——

"Yes. I know," said Mrs. Fläsch, with cutting irony in her speech. "I know that you have much to do—many pledges and a good business, and necklaces"——

And a bitter word was just about to glide from the lips of the speaker, and Dame Flörsheim had turned as red as a lobster, when Puppy Reiss cried out loudly, "For God's sake!—the strange lady lies dying—water! water!"

Beautiful Sara lay insensible, pale as death, while a swarm of women, busy and bewailing, crowded round her. One held her head, another her arm, some old women sprinkled her with the glasses of water which hung behind their



prayer desks for washing the hands in case they should by accident touch their own bodies. Others held under her nose an old lemon stuck full of spices, which remained from the last feast-day, when it had served for smelling and strengthening the nerves. Exhausted and sighing deeply, Beautiful Sara at last opened her eyes, and with mute glances thanked them for their kind care. But now the eighteenth prayer, which no one dare neglect, was heard in thrilling sound below, and the busy women hurried back to their places and offered the prayer as the rite ordains, standing up with their faces turned towards the east, which is that part of the heavens where Jerusalem lies. Birdie Ochs, Schnapper Elle, and Puppy Reiss stayed to the last by Beautiful Sara—the first two to aid her as much as possible, the latter to find out why it was that she fainted so suddenly.

Beautiful Sara had swooned from a singular cause. It is a custom in the synagogue that any one who has escaped a great danger shall, after the reading of the extracts from the Law, appear in public and return thanks for his Divine deliverance. As Rabbi Abraham rose in the multitude to make his prayer, and Beautiful Sara recognised her husband's voice, she also observed how its accents gradually subsided into the mournful murmur of the prayer for the dead. She

heard the names of her dear ones and relations, accompanied by the words which convey the blessing on the departed; and the last hope vanished from her soul, for it was torn by the certainty that those dear ones had really been slain, that her little niece was dead, that her little cousins with flowers and birds were dead, that little Gottschalk was dead too. All murdered and dead. And she too would have died from the agony of this conviction, had not a kind swoon poured forgetfulness over her soul.

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### CHAPTER THIRD.

WHEN Beautiful Sara, after divine service was ended, went down into the courtyard of the synagogue, the Rabbi stood there waiting for her. He nodded to her with a cheerful expression, and accompanied her out into the street, where there was no longer silence but a noisy multitude. It was like a stream of ants, what with bearded men in black coats, women gleaming along like gold-chafers, boys in new clothes carrying prayer-books after their parents, young girls who, because they could not enter the synagogue, now came bounding to their parents, bowing their curly heads to receive their blessings—all gay and merry, and walking about with the happy antici-

pations of people expecting a good dinner, the exquisite scent of which—causing the mouth to water—rose from many black pots and covers carried by smiling girls from the great public bakery.

In this multitude there was specially to be remarked the form of a Spanish cavalier, whose youthful features bore that fascinating pallor which ladies generally associate with an unfortunate—and men, on the contrary, with a very fortunate—love affair. His gait, naturally careless, had however in it a somewhat affected mincing daintiness; the feathers of his cap were more agitated by the aristocratic waving of his head than by the wind; and his golden spurs, and the jewelled guard of his sword, which he bore on his arm, rattled rather more than was needed. A white cavalier's cloak enveloped his slender limbs in an apparently careless manner, which, however, betrayed the most careful arrangement of the folds. Passing and repassing, partly with curiosity, partly with an air of a connoisseur, he approached the women walking by, looked calmly at them, paused when he thought a face was worth the trouble, gave to many a pretty girl a passing compliment, and went his way heedless as to its effect. He had met Beautiful Sara more than once, but seemed to be repelled every time by her commanding look, or the enigmatical smiling

air of her husband, but at last, proudly subduing all diffidence, he boldly faced both, and with foppish confidence made in a tenderly gallant tone the following speech:—

“I swear, Senora!—list to me!—I swear—by the roses of both the kingdoms of Castile, by the Aragonese hyacinths and the pomegranate blossoms of Andalusia! by the sun which illumines all Spain, with all its flowers, onions, pea-soups, forests, mountains, mules, he-goats, and Old Christians! by the canopy of heaven, of which this sun is the golden tassel! and by the God who sits on the roof of heaven and meditates day and night over the creation of new forms of lovely women!—I swear that you, Senora, are the fairest dame whom I have seen in all the German realm, and if you please to accept my service, then I pray of you the favour, grace, and leave to call myself your knight and bear your colours henceforth in jest or earnest!”

A flush as of pain rose in the face of Beautiful Sara, and with one of those glances which are the most cutting from the gentlest eyes, and with a tone such as is bitterest from a beautiful voice, the lady answered as one deeply hurt:—

“My noble lord, if you will be my knight you must fight whole races, and in the battle there will be little thanks to win and less honour; and if you will wear my colours, then

you must sew yellow rings on your cloak, or bind you with a blue-striped scarf, for such are my colours—the colours of my house, the House of Israel, which is wretched indeed, one mocked in the streets by the sons of good fortune.”

A sudden purple red shot into the cheeks of the Spaniard; an inexpressible confusion seemed to seize him as he stammered—

“Senora, you misunderstood me. An innocent jest—but, by God, no mockery, no jest at Israel. I myself am sprung from that house; my grandfather was a Jew, perhaps even my father.”

“And it is very certain, Senor, that your uncle is one,” suddenly exclaimed the Rabbi, who had calmly witnessed this scene; and with a merry quizzical glance he added, “And I myself will be bound that Don Isaac Abarbanel, nephew of the great Rabbi, is sprung from the best blood of Israel, if not from the royal race of David!”

The chain of the sword rattled under the Spaniard’s cloak, his cheeks became deadly white, his upper lip twitched as with scorn in which there was pain, and angry death grinned in his eyes as in an utterly changed, ice-cold, keen voice he said:—

“Senor Rabbi, you know me. Well, then, you know also who I am. And if the fox



knows that I belong to the blood of the lion, let him beware and not bring his fox-beard into danger of death, nor provoke my anger. Only he who feels like the lion can understand his weakness."

"Oh, I understand it well," answered the Rabbi, and a mournful seriousness came over his brow. "I understand it well, how the proud lion, out of pride, casts aside his princely hide and goes mumming in the scaly armour of a crocodile, because it is the fashion to be a grinning, cunning, greedy crocodile! What can you expect the lesser beasts to be when the lion denies his nature? But beware, Don Isaac, *thou* wert not made for the element of the crocodile. For water—thou knowest well what I mean—is thy evil fortune, and thou wilt perish. Water is not thy element; the weakest trout can live in it better than the king of the forest. Hast thou forgotten how the eddy of the Tagus would swallow thee?"

Bursting into loud laughter, Don Isaac suddenly threw his arms round the Rabbi's neck, covered his mouth with kisses, leapt with jingling spurs high into the air, so that the Jews who were passing by shrank back in alarm, and in his own natural hearty and joyous voice cried—

"Truly thou art Abraham of Bacharach! And

it was a good joke, and more than that, a friendly act, when thou—in Toledo—didst leap from the Alcantara bridge into the water, and grasp by the hair thy friend, who could drink better than he could swim, and drew him to dry land. I was very near making really deep research whether there is actually gold in the sands of the Tagus, and whether the Romans were right in calling it the golden river. I assure you that I shiver even now from only thinking of that water-party."

Saying this the Spaniard made a gesture as if he were shaking water from his garments. The countenance of the Rabbi expressed great joy as he again and again pressed his friend's hand, saying every time—

"I am indeed glad."

"And so indeed am I," answered the other. "It is seven years now since we met, and when we parted I was as yet only a little greenhorn, and thou—thou wert already so staid and serious. But whatever became of the beautiful Donna who in those days cost thee so many sighs, which thou didst accompany with the lute?"

"Hush, hush! the Donna hears us—she is my wife, and thou hast thyself given her to-day a proof of thy taste and poetic skill."

It was not without some trace of his former embarrassment that the Spaniard greeted the beautiful lady, who amiably regretted that she,

by expressing herself so plainly, had pained a friend of her husband.

"Ah, Senora," replied Don Isaac, "he who grasps too snappishly at a rose must not complain that the thorns scratch. When the star of evening mirrors itself, gold-gleaming, in the azure flood"——

"For God's sake!" interrupted the Rabbi, "cease! If we wait till the star of evening mirrors itself, gold-gleaming in the azure flood, my wife will starve, for she has eaten nothing since yesterday, and suffered much meantime."

"Well, then, I will take you to the best cookshop of Israel," said Don Isaac, "to the house of my friend Schnapper Elle, which is not far away. I already smell the sweet perfume of the kitchen! Oh, didst thou but know, O Abraham, how this perfume woos and wins me. This it is which, since I have dwelt in this city, has so often lured me to the tents of Jacob. Intimacy with God's peculiar people is not a weakness of mine, and tru'y it is not to pray but to eat that I visit the Jews' Street."

"Thou hast never loved us, Don Isaac."

"Well," continued the Spaniard, "I like your cookery much better than your creed—which wants the right sauce. I really never could rightly digest you. Even in your best days, under the rule of my ancestor David, who

was king over Judah and Israel, I never could have held out, and certainly I should some fine morning have run away from Mount Zion and emigrated to Phœnicia or Babylon, where the joys of life foamed in the temple of the gods."

"Thou blasphemest, Isaac, blasphemest the one God," murmured the Rabbi grimly. "Thou art much worse than a Christian—thou art a heathen, a servant of idols."

"Yes, I am a heathen, and the melancholy self-tormenting Nazarenes are quite as little to my taste as the dry and joyless Hebrews. May our dear Lady of Sidon, holy Astarte, forgive me, that I kneel before the many sorrowed Mother of the Crucified and pray. Only my knee and my tongue worship death—my heart remains true to life."

"But do not look so sourly," continued the Spaniard, as he saw how little gratification his speech seemed to give the Rabbi. "Do not look at me with disdain. My nose is not a renegade. When I once by chance came at dinner time into this street, and the well-known savoury odours of the Jewish kitchen rose to my nose, I was seized by the same yearning which our fathers felt for the fleshpots of Egypt—pleasant tasting memories of youth came unto me. I saw again in spirit the carp with brown raisin sauce which my aunt prepared so sustainingly for Friday eve—I saw once more the steamed

mutton with garlic and horse-radish which might raise the dead, and the soup with dreamily swimming force-meat balls—the Klösschen—and my soul melted like the notes of an enamoured nightingale—and since then I eat in the cook-shop of my friend Donna Schnapper Elle.”

Meanwhile they had arrived at the place so highly praised, where Schnapper Elle stood at the door greeting in a friendly manner the strangers come to the fair, who, led by hunger, streamed in. Behind, and putting forth his head over her shoulder, was the tall Nose Star, anxiously and inquisitively observing them. Don Isaac approached the landlady with exaggerated grand style, who returned his satirically deep reverences with endless curtseys, after which he drew the glove from his right hand, wound it about with the fold of his cloak, and grasping that of Schnapper Elle, drew it over his moustaches and said:—

“Senora! your eyes rival the glow of the sun! But as eggs the longer they are boiled the harder they become, so on the contrary my heart grows softer the longer it is cooked in the flaming flashes of your eyes. From the yolk of my heart flies up the winged god Amor and seeks a confiding nest in your bosom. And oh, Senora, wherewith shall I compare that bosom? For in all the world there is no flower, no fruit,



which is like to it! This growth is only of its kind alone! Though the storm wind tears away the leaves from the tenderest rose, your bosom is still a winter rose which defies all storms. Though the sour lemon the older it grows becomes yellower and more wrinkled, your bosom rivals in colour and softness the sweetest pineapple. Oh, Senora, if the city of Amsterdam be as beautiful as you told me yesterday, and the day before, and every day, yet is the ground on which it rests far lovelier still."

The cavalier spoke these last words with affected earnestness, and squinted as if yearning at the great picture-plate which hung from Schnapper Elle's neck. Nose Star looked down with inquisitive eyes, and the much-bepraised bosom heaved so that the whole city of Amsterdam rocked from side to side.

"Ah!" sighed Schnapper Elle, "virtue is worth more than beauty. What use is my beauty to me? My youth is passing away, and since Schnapper is gone—anyhow, he had handsome hands—what avails beauty."

With that she sighed again, and like an echo all but inaudible Nose Star sighed behind her.

"Of what avail is your beauty?" cried Don Isaac. "Oh, Donna Schnapper Elle, do not sin against the goodness of creative Nature! Do not scorn your most charming gifts. She will

terribly revenge herself. Those blessed blessing eyes will be like dim glasses, those winsome lips grow flat and commonplace, that chaste and charming form be changed into a barrel of tallow hardly pleasing to any one, and the city of Amsterdam at last rest on a spongy bog."

So he sketched piece by piece the appearance of Schnapper Elle, so that the poor woman was bewildered, and sought to escape the uncanny compliments of the cavalier. She was delighted at this instant to see Beautiful Sara appear, as it gave her an opportunity to inquire whether she had quite recovered from her swoon. Thereupon she rushed into lively chatter, in which she fully developed her sham gentility, mingled with real kindness of heart, and related with much more sensibility than common sense the awful story how she herself had almost fainted with horror when she, as innocent and inexperienced as could be, came in a canal boat to Amsterdam, and the rascally porter who carried her trunk led her—not to a respectable tavern, but oh, horrors!—to an infamous place! She saw what it was the moment she entered, by the brandy-drinking; and, oh!—the immorality that was going on!—and she would, as she said, "really have swooned, if it had not been that during the six weeks she stayed there she only once ventured to close her eyes."

“I dared not,” she added, “on account of my virtue. And all that took place because of my beauty! But virtue will stay—when good looks pass away.”<sup>1</sup>

Don Isaac was beginning to go somewhat critically into the details of this story when, fortunately, Squinting Aaron Hirschkuh from Hamburg on the Lahn came, a white apron on his arm, and bitterly bewailed that the soup was already served, and that the boarders were seated at table, but that the landlady was missing.

(The conclusion and the chapters which follow are lost, not from any fault of the author.)

<sup>1</sup> Aber Schönheit vergeht und Tugend besteht.

SHAKESPEARE'S  
MAIDENS AND WOMEN.





## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

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It is a rule with rare exceptions that the more a literary work is inspired with genius, the more necessary it is for us to form a true conception of the habits of thought of the author, his principles or "morals," his excellences or demerits. This is particularly the case with writers who gossip about themselves, who take wild or eccentric flights of fancy, and above all with those who, believing themselves to be perfectly informed or correct, often unconsciously mingle error and prejudices with great truths, and also noble inspirations, and the combination of great learning with the charm of poetry. Henry Heine was pre-eminently such a writer, and the work on Shakespeare's "Maidens and Women" by him, which is here presented in English, deserves careful study, as being from this point of view the most characteristic of all his works. It is a small book, it bears intrinsic evidence of having been a *pièce de manufacture* recklessly

put together, and it is professedly merely "written up" to supply the letterpress for a series of engravings. The fact that *all* the female characters of the comedies of Shakespeare are only illustrated by quotations, would seem to indicate either that the author's or publisher's original intention was to confine the text to such citations, or that the former, becoming weary of his task, finished the work with this lame and impotent conclusion. In several chapters the lady character serves as a mere peg whereon to hang some brilliant garment of an essay, behind which she is quite concealed, and in many cases the citations from the comedies are far from being apt or well chosen. That carelessness prevailed is shown in the fact that none of the numerous quotations in the tragedies are given in the German original, with references to act or scene—an omission which has been a cause of annoyance to many a reader—while several of these references in the comedies are incorrectly numbered.

On the other hand, it may be fairly said that, making every allowance for every error of commission or omission, there is probably no small work of the kind in any language which is so well worth reading. The tribute to the genius of Shakespeare, whom the author sincerely believed to be immeasurably the greatest genius in the world, as contrasted to his narrow-

mindful hatred of the English, is in the highest degree interesting and piquant. Not less able are his accounts of the development of the influence of Shakespeare in Germany and France, while the vivacity of expression, the brilliancy of tone and colour, and the accurate though miraculously *rapid* sketching of outline of the tragical characters, or of others connected with them, is not surpassed, if it be equalled, by any writer of this century. If it be a test of the original merit or character of men or books that we can remember something of them, this work should rank among the best, since few who read it will ever forget its valuable information, or the brilliant style in which it is conveyed—apples of gold on plates of silver.

These apples are not all, however, of purest gold, and I have, I trust judiciously, pointed out in notes what I believed to be the admixtures of baser metal. It is so much the habit of translators, like biographers, to swallow their subjects whole “without winking,” and to exalt them as perfect in every conceivable respect, that the idea of pointing out or admitting errors in mine will seem to many to be simply an unpleasant paradox. This will certainly be the case with those who read merely for pastime, and who dislike anything which calls for thought or disturbs the even current of their waking dream,

and still more so with the fanatical *æsthete* or Heine worshipper, who believes, like all idolaters, that his idol is perfection and all solid gold, even though the wooden core appears visibly through cracks in the plating. But the sensible critic knows that it is after all of immense value, and makes allowance for defects.

I believe that Heine himself would have approved in his heart of such fair treatment. He was as a rule only an enemy to such as had reviled him with *personal* insult, as did Platen. In the chapter on Anna Bullen he praises Queen Elizabeth because she desired that Shakespeare should set forth the English sovereigns, including her own father, with perfect impartiality. Heine *knew* his own defects—his contradictions of character, inconsistencies, and errors—he admits them sadly and sincerely enough, and rather touchingly attempts, like a child, to put them off on something else—“on this horrid age.”

But Heine was also conscious of his own stupendous genius, and knew that the bell, though it had a flaw in it, could ring forth tones which should be heard to all times. Therefore he would not have objected even to the closest criticism, if it were truthful, and accompanied with sincere and enlightened appreciation of his merits. The latter indeed speak for themselves so loudly and clearly as to require no comment.

With his errors it is another affair, and one of these glides so subtly into all his works, and into every expression of opinion, be it on subjects social, political, or æsthetic, that the reader should be in all fairness now and then reminded of it. This error is the inconsistency which sprang from his education and life. Professedly a revolutionary or radical, *ami du peuple* or socialist, more or less here and there—or now and then—and an exile for liberty, *et cetera*, there seldom lived a man who loved aristocracy or “gentility” more, and this is shown in an absolutely amusing manner in several passages in this work, especially in his comments on Queen Margaret, where he taunts English chivalry as being tainted with the shop-keeping spirit, and sneers at the battle of Cressy, as I have pointed out in a note. Bearing this in mind, the reader need not be puzzled, as many have been, with apparent contradictions. With less genius and more settled principles Heine would have been unquestionably a far greater man, and probably not less brilliant. There is a popular belief that without some inconsistency or eccentricity there can be no genius; but Shakespeare, the very type of genius, is a proof to the contrary.

THE TRANSLATOR.





# SHAKESPEARE'S MAIDENS AND WOMEN.

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## INTRODUCTION.

I KNOW a good Hamburg Christian who can never reconcile himself to the fact that our Lord and Saviour was by birth a Jew. A deep dissatisfaction seizes him when he must admit to himself that the man who, as the pattern of perfection, deserves the highest honour, was still of kin to those snuffling, long-nosed fellows who go running about the streets selling old clothes, whom he so utterly despises, and who are even more desperately detestable when they—like himself—apply themselves to the wholesale business of spices and dye-stuffs, and encroach upon his interests.

As Jesus Christ is to this excellent son of Hammonia, so is Shakespeare to me. It takes the heart out of me when I remember that he is an Englishman, and belongs to the most repulsive race which God in His wrath ever created.

What a repulsive people, what a cheerless, unrefreshing country! How strait-ruled, hide-

bound, home-made; how selfish, how angular, how Anglican!<sup>1</sup> A country which would long ago have been swallowed up by the sea if it had not feared that it would cause internal pain . . . a race, a grey gaping monster, which breathes only nitrogen<sup>2</sup> and deadly ennui, and which will certainly at last hang itself with a colossal cable.

And in such a land and among such people William Shakespeare first saw the light in 1564.

But the England of those days where—in the Northern Bethlehem called Stratford-upon-Avon—the man was born to whom we are indebted for the world's gospel known as the Shakesperian Drama—that England was certainly very different from that of to-day; it was even termed Merry England, and it flourished in gleaming colour, masque-merriment, deep meaning frolicsome folly, sparkling earnest action, transcendent-

<sup>1</sup> *Wie eng, wie Englisch.* Literally, how narrow or close; implying also angular, contracted movements. Heine was much given to these little, old-fashioned *quodlibets* and puns which are so much admired by certain readers as “untranslatable graces,” and brilliant points of “ineffably graceful style” or “wealth of imagery.” Out of justice to Heine it may be here recalled that, many years after, he expressed to Lady Duff Gordon deep regret for all this early abuse of everything English, confessing that it was mere ill-tempered caprice, and that he was quite ignorant of the people.—“*Ich habe sie auch nicht gekannt.*” It is probable that false second-hand ideas as to English “Puritanism,” and a desire to please his French readers, had a great deal to do with it.—*Translator.*

<sup>2</sup> *Nitrogen.* In German, *Stickstoff*, literally strangling-stuff.

dreaming passion. Life was there still a gay tournament, where the knight of noble birth certainly played in jest or earnest the leading part, but where the clear ringing trumpet-tone also thrilled the heart of the citizen. Instead of heavy beer, people then drank light-hearted wine, that democratic drink which makes all men alike when inspired by it, though they still on the sober stages of real life divide themselves according to rank and birth.

All of this gay and many-coloured life has faded; silent are the joyful trumpet-tones, the sweet intoxication is gone for aye! And the book which is called the "Dramatic Works of William Shakespeare" is now a consolation in evil times, and a proof still extant in the hands of the people that a merry England really did exist.

It is lucky for us that Shakespeare came just at the right time, that he was a contemporary of Elizabeth and James, while Protestantism, it is true, expressed itself in the unbridled freedom of thought which prevailed, but which had not yet entered into life or feeling, and the kingdom lighted by the last rays of setting chivalry still bloomed and gleamed in all the glory of poetry. True, the popular faith of the Middle Ages, or Catholicism, was gone as regarded doctrine, but it existed as yet with all its magic in men's hearts, and held its own in manners, customs,

and views. It was not till later that the Puritans succeeded in plucking away flower by flower, and utterly rooting up the religion of the past, and spreading over all the land, as with a grey canopy, that dreary sadness which since then, dispirited and debilitated, has diluted itself to a lukewarm, whining, drowsy pietism. Nor had the kingdom, any more than the religion, in Shakespeare's time, suffered that heavy languid change now known to us as the constitutional form of government, which, however it may have benefited European freedom, has in no way advanced or aided *Art*.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In this passage we perceive to perfection Heine's great weakness, that is, his inconsistency and his real inability to be a *leader* in politics or thought. He was fond of assuming to be the first of the reformers of his time, but no London "æsthete" ever surpassed him in practically preferring "Art," or what he found personally agreeable, refined, and elegant, to great principles, or in being now one thing and then another. He was very vain of his intimate knowledge of everything English, but it did not go beyond *superficial* characteristics. He curses the Anglican in the beginning of this chapter as "the most repulsive race ever created by God in His wrath," apparently because he did not like their beer, cookery, and piety, and manifests in his amusing attempts at political economical criticism an incredible ignorance of, and indifference to, the real influence of the national debt and commerce. He was a genius within his sphere, but unfortunately he too often attempts to show himself as one without its limits. A brave and leading soldier of freedom who deserves the name does not regard it as inferior to "Art." In the next sentences the reader will find him bewailing the death of Charles I. as a great calamity and out-



With the blood of Charles I., the great, true, and last king, all the poetry ran from the veins of England, and thrice happy was the poet who did not live to witness this sorrowful event, which he had perhaps foreboded. Shakespeare has in our time often been called an aristocrat. This I would not deny. I would very much rather excuse his political inclinations when I reflect that his foreseeing poet's eye perceived the dead-levelling Puritan times which were to make an end, with the kingdom, of all enjoyment of life, all poetry, and all bright and cheerful Art.

Yes, during the rule of the Puritans in England, Art was outlawed; as when the evangelical zeal raged against the theatre, and even the name of Shakespeare was long extinguished in popular remembrance. It awakens our astonishment when we read in the current literature of that time—for instance, in the “*Histrio-Mastix*” of the famous Prynne—the outbreak of wrath with which the anathema of the drama is croaked. Shall we blame the Puritans too severely for such zealotry. Truly not; every one is, in history, in the right if he remains true to his indwelling principle, and the rage, while in other places he exults in the guillotine, the French revolution, and regicide. “The age” is no excuse for such inconsistency. The more chaotic an age is, the more it becomes a genius to form inherent principles, and act or write up to them.—*Translator.*

gloomy Roundheads only followed the consequences of that anti-artistic spirit which had already manifested itself in the first centuries of the Church, and made its iconoclastic power felt more or less to this day.

This old, irreconcilable antipathy against the theatre is nothing but one side of that enmity which for eighteen hundred years has raged and ruled between two utterly dissimilar views of life, one of which first grew on the arid, barren soil of Judæa, and the other in blooming Greece. For full eighteen hundred years has the grudge and rancour between Jerusalem and Athens, between the Holy Sepulchre and the cradle of Art, between life in the spirit and the spirit in life, prevailed, and the irritation or friction, and public and private feuds which it has caused, reveal themselves plainly to the esoteric reader in the history of mankind. When we read to-day in the newspapers that the Archbishop of Paris has refused Christian burial<sup>1</sup> to a poor dead actor, such action is not influenced by any priestly caprice, and only a short-sighted person can perceive in it narrow-minded malice. What here inspires is rather the spirit of an ancient strife, a battle to death against Art, which was often employed by the Hellenic spirit as a

<sup>1</sup> *Gebräuchlichen Begräbnissehren*, "the usual honours of burial."

rostrum from which to preach life against deadening, benumbing Judaism—the Church persecuted in the actors the agents of Hellenism, and this persecution often followed the poets who derived their inspiration only from Apollo, and assured a refuge to the proscribed heathen gods in the land of poetry.

Or was there perhaps some spite in the game? The most intolerable foes of the oppressed Church, during the first two centuries, were the players, and the *Acta Sanctorum* often tell how these “infamous actors” often devoted themselves for the amusement of the heathen mob to mocking the manner of life and mysteries of the Nazarenes. Or was it a mutual jealousy which begot such bitter enmity between the servants of the spiritual and the worldly word?

Next to ascetic, religious zeal was the republican fanaticism which inspired the Puritans in their hatred for the old English stage, in which not only heathenism and heathenish tastes, but also royalism and nobility were exalted. I have shown in another place<sup>1</sup> how much resemblance there was in this respect between the Puritans of those days and the Republicans of ours. May Apollo and the eternal Muses protect us from the rule of the latter!

In the whirlpool of the priestly and political

<sup>1</sup> In discussing the characters in *Julius Cæsar* in the following pages.—*Note by H. Heine.*

upsettings and revolutions described, the name of Shakespeare was long lost, and it was nearly a century ere he again rose to fame and honour. Since then his renown has risen from day to day—and he was indeed as a spiritual sun for that country where the real sun is wanting twelve months in the year, for that island of damnation, that Botany Bay without a southern climate, that stone-coal-stinking,<sup>1</sup> machinery-buzzing, church-going, and vilely drunken England! Benevolent nature never quite disinherits her creatures, and while she denied the English all which is beautiful or worthy of love, and gave them neither voice for song nor sense of enjoyment—and perhaps endowed them with leathern porter bottles or jacks, instead of human souls—bestowed on them for recompense a large portion of municipal freedom, the talent to make themselves comfortably at home, and William Shakespeare.

Yes, this is the sun which glorifies that land with its loveliest light, with its gracious beams. Everything there reminds us of Shakespeare, and by it the most ordinary objects appear transfigured and idealised. Everywhere the wings of his genius rustle round us, his clear eye gleams on us from every significant occurrence, and in great events we often seem to see him nod—nod gently—softly and smiling.

<sup>1</sup> *Steinkohlenqualmige.*

This unceasing memory of and through Shakespeare became significantly clear to me during my residence in London, while I, an inquisitive traveller, ran about from early morn till deep into the night, to see the so-called noteworthy objects. Every lion recalled the greater lion Shakespeare. All the places which I visited live an immortal life in his historical dramas, and were known to me from my earliest youth. But these dramas are known in England not only by the cultivated, but by the people, and even the stout beefeater who with his red coat and red face acts as guide to the Tower, and shows you behind the middle gate the dungeon where Richard caused the young princes, his nephews, to be murdered, refers you to Shakespeare, who has described minutely the details of this harrowing history. Also the verger who leads you round through Westminster Abbey always speaks of Shakespeare, in whose tragedies those dead kings and queens whose stony counterfeits here lie stretched out on their sarcophagi—and whom he shows to you for eighteenpence—play such a wild or lamentable part.

He himself, or the image of the great poet, stands there the size of life, a noble form with a thoughtful head, holding in his hand a roll of parchment. There may be magic words inscribed on it, and when he moves at midnight his white



lips, and calls the dead who rest in the vaults below, they rise with rusted armour and antiquated court dresses—the knights of the white and red rose; even the ladies come forth sighing from their resting-place, and a clatter of swords, laughter and curses, rings around, just as at Drury Lane, where I so often saw Shakespeare's historical dramas played, and where Kean moved my soul so mightily when he rushed desperately across the stage crying—

“A horse, a horse, my kingdom for a horse!”

But I must copy the Guide-book of London if I would mention every place where Shakespeare was brought to my mind. This happened most significantly in Parliament; not so much because its place is the Westminster Hall, so often spoken of in the Shakesperian dramas, but because while I there listened to the debates, Shakespeare was alluded to several times, and his verses were quoted, not with reference to their poetical, but to their historical importance. To my amazement, I remarked that Shakespeare is not only celebrated in England as a poet, but recognised as a writer of history by the highest state or parliament officials.

This leads me to the remark that it is unjust, when reading the historical dramas of Shakespeare, to require what only a poet can give, or



one to whom poetry and its artistic surroundings are the highest aim. Shakespeare's theme, or task, was not merely poetry, but also history. He could not model the subject-matter as he chose, he could not create events and characters at his caprice, and just as little as he could determine unity of time and place could he regulate that of interest for particular persons or deeds. And yet in these historical dramas poetry streams forth more powerfully, richly, and sweetly than in the tragedies of those writers who either invent or vary their own plots at will, who aim at the most perfect symmetry of form, and who in "art proper," especially in the *enchaînement des scènes*, far surpass poor Shakespeare.

Yes—there we have it—the great Briton is not only a poet, but a historian; he wields not only the dagger of Melpomene, but the still sharper stylus of Clio.<sup>1</sup> In this respect he is like the earliest writers of history, who also knew no difference between poetry and history, and so gave us not merely a nomenclature of the things done, or a dusty *herbarium* of events, but who enlightened truth with song, and in whose song was heard only the voice of truth.<sup>2</sup> The so-

<sup>1</sup> The stylus for writing was often used as a dagger among the Romans (*Adams*).—*Translator*.

<sup>2</sup> Herein lies the value of folk-lore as an aid to the study of history, that it supplies the inner life of the people in all things

called objectivity of which we at present hear so much is nothing else than a dried up lie; it is not possible to sketch the past without giving it the colour of our own feelings. Yes, the so-called objective writer of history, directing his words to the men of his time, writes involuntarily in the spirit of his time; and this spirit will be perceptible in his writings, just as in letters which betray not only the character of the writer but of the receiver. That so-called objectivity which, puffed up with its lifelessness, enthrones itself on the Golgotha of actual deeds, is on that very account to be rejected, because we need for historical truth not only the exact statement of facts, but also *certain* information of the impression which a fact produced on contemporaries. To give such information is, however, the hardest problem, since it requires not only the usual imparting of actual facts, but also the capacity of perception<sup>1</sup> in the poet to whom, as Shakespeare says, the being and the body of past times have become visible.

And not only had the phenomena of his own national history become visible to him, but also —that is to say, it does this so long as its students do not turn it into mere tables of comparison of tales and superstitions.—  
*Translator.*

<sup>1</sup> *Anschauungsvermögen.* *Selbstanschauungsvermögen*, the faculty of self-perception (*Kant*). *Kritik der reinen Vernunft.*—  
*Translator.*

those of which the annals of antiquity have given us knowledge, as we behold to our amazement in the dramas where he paints the Roman realm, long passed away, with truest colours. As he saw to the inner life the knights of the Middle Ages, so did he that of the heroes of the antique world, and bade them speak out the deepest word of their souls. And he always knew how to raise Truth to Poetry; and how to set forth in poetic light that hard and sober race of prose, those combinations of rude rapine and refined legal shrewdness, that casuistic *soldatesca*, the unsentimental Romans.

But yet as regards his Roman dramas, Shakespeare must needs incur the reproach of being without form, and a highly-gifted author, Dietrich Grabbe, even called them<sup>1</sup> "poetically adorned chronicles," wherein all central motive was wanting, where no one knew who was the leading or side character, and where, even if we dispensed with unity of time and place, we can find no unity of interest. A strange error of the shrewdest critics! For neither is this last-named unity, nor those of place and time, at all wanting to our great poet. Only that the *ideas*<sup>2</sup> are

<sup>1</sup> In an essay on the Shakespearomania, in the second volume of "Dramatic Poems," by Grabbe, Fraukfort, 1827.—*Note by the German Publisher.*

<sup>2</sup> *Begriffe*, conceptions.

somewhat broader in his mind than in ours: the stage of his dramas is the whole wide world, and that is his unity of place; eternity is the time in which his pieces played, and that is his unity of time; and in keeping with both is the hero of his dramas, who forms the central point, and represents the unity of interest. And humanity is that hero who ever dies and comes to life again; who ever loves and hates, yet loves the most; who bends like a worm to-day, and soars to-morrow like an eagle to the sun—deserving to-day a cap and bells, to-morrow a laurel wreath, and oftener both together: the great dwarf, the little giant, the homœopathically prepared divinity, in whom that which is divine is indeed terribly diluted, but still there. Ah! let us not speak too much of the heroism of this hero, out of very modesty and shame.

The same fidelity and truth which Shakespeare manifests as regards history is found as to Nature. People are wont to say that he held the mirror up to it. The expression is incorrect, for it leads us astray as to the relations of the poet to Nature. In the poetic soul not only Nature is mirrored, but an image of it which, being like the most faithful reflection of a looking-glass, is born in the spirit of the poet; he brings at the same time the world forth unto the world, and if he, awaking from the dreaming age of child-

hood, attains to self-consciousness, *then* every portion of the outer world of seeming is at once grasped by him in all its mutual relations, for he bears a likeness of the whole in his soul, he knows the deepest foundation of all phenomena which are riddles to common minds, and which, when investigated by the ordinary methods, are understood with difficulty, or not at all. And as the mathematician, when only the smallest portion of a circle is given, infallibly deduces from it the whole circle and the centre, so the poet, when only the merest fragments of the world of things which seem is presented, then to him appear clearly all that is connected with it; he knows at once the periphery and centre of all things, yea, he understands them in their widest comprehension and deepest central point.

But some fragment of the outer world must always be given before the poet can develop that wonderful process of completing a world; and this perfect apprehension of a part of the world of perception is effected by sensation, and is simultaneously the external occurrence, the inner revelations of which are determined, and to which we owe the art-works of the poet. The greater these works, the more anxiously desirous are we to know those external occurrences which inspired the motive. We gladly investigate memoranda of the actual life of the poet. This curiosity is



the more ridiculous because, as appears from what has been said, the greatness of external events is in no proportion to the greatness of the creations thereby called forth. These events may be very trifling and invisible, and, in fact, generally are so, just as the external life of the poet is usually small and unnoted—I say small and unnoted, for I will not use harsher expressions. The poets show themselves to the world in the splendour of their works, and it is specially when one sees them from afar that the beholder is dazzled by the rays. Let us never look too closely into their ways. They are like the lovely lights which gleam so gloriously of summer evenings from grassy banks and foliage, that one might believe they were the stars of the earth, or diamonds and emeralds, or jewels rich and rare, which kings' children who had been playing in the garden had left hanging on the bushes and there forgotten; or glowing sun-drops lost amid the grass, and which now, revived by the cool night, awake and gleam with joy till the morning returns, and the red flaming star draws them up again unto himself. Ah, seek not by broad daylight the traces of those stars, jewels, and sun-drops! In their place you will find a poor miscoloured wormlet which crawls wretchedly along, whose look repels you, and whom you do not tread under foot out of sheer pity.

And what was the private life of Shakespeare? In spite of all research we have learned almost nothing of it, and it is fortunate that we have not. Only all kinds of unverified, foolish tales have been told continually about his youth and life. So he is said, while employed by his father who was a butcher, to have slaughtered oxen. This was probably the surmise of certain English commentators who, probably out of ill feeling, attribute to him general ignorance and want of art. Then he was a dealer in wool, and did not succeed. Poor fellow, he thought perhaps that from wool he would come to sit on the woolsack. I do not believe a word of it all—'tis simply a great cry and little wool. I am more inclined to believe that he was a poacher, and came to prison through a fawn; for which, however, I do not condemn him. "Even Honour once stole a calf," says a German proverb.<sup>1</sup> Then he fled to London, and held gentlemen's horses for a fee before theatre doors. Something like this are the fables which one old woman chatters after the other in literary history.

The sonnets of Shakespeare are more authentic documents as to his life, which I, however, would not discuss, yet which, from the deep human misery

<sup>1</sup> There is a pun here, something of the spirit of which may be given by translating this as "even Pride once fawned."—*Translator.*

which is therein revealed, tempted me into my previous remarks as to the private life of the poet.

The want of more accurate information as to Shakespeare's life is readily explained when we recall the political and religious storms which burst wildly out soon after his death—calling forth for a time an absolute Puritan dominion, which long after had a cold, deadening influence, and not only destroyed the golden age of Elizabethan literature, but brought it into absolute oblivion. When in the beginning of the last century the works of Shakespeare again came to the full light of day, all traditions which could aid in analysing the text were utterly wanting, and commentators were obliged to take refuge in a criticism which drew from superficial empiricism, and a more lamentable materialism, their last dregs. With the exception of William Hazlitt, England has given us no commentator of any consequence; in all the works of all the others we find only petty huckstering of trifles, self-reflecting shallowness, enthusiastic mysticism, pedantic puffed-upness which threatens to burst for joy, when they can convict the poor poet of an antiquarian, geographical, or chronological error, and thereby bewail that he unfortunately did not study the ancients in the original tongues, and had thereunto but little schooling. He makes

his Romans wear hats,<sup>1</sup> lets ships land in Bohemia, and suffers Aristotle to be quoted in the time of Troy! Which was more than an English scholar who had graduated *Magister Artium* at Oxford could endure! The only commentator on Shakespeare whom I cited as an exception, and who is indeed unique in every aspect, was the late Hazlitt, a mind which was as brilliant as deep, a comingling of Diderôt and Bôrne, combining flaming zeal for the revolution with the most glowing sense of art, ever sparkling with *verve* and *esprit*.

The Germans have comprehended Shakespeare better than the English. And here I must again recall that great name which is ever to be found where there is question of a great beginning. Gottlob Ephraim Lessing was the first man who raised his voice in Germany for Shakespeare. He it was who bore the first and greatest stone for a temple to the greatest of all poets, and, what was more praiseworthy, he took the pains to clear the ground on which this temple was to be raised of all its ancient rubbish. Without pity he tore down the light French stage-show which spread wide over the place, so inspired was he with a genial love of building. Gottsched shook the locks of his peruke so despairingly that all

<sup>1</sup> Which they certainly did, occasionally. The putting on a hat was the ceremony by which a slave was made free."—*Translator*.

Leipzig trembled, and the cheeks of his spouse grew white with fear—or from pearl-powder. One may say that the whole dramaturgy of Lessing was written in the interest of Shakespeare.

Next to Lessing we have Wieland. By his translation of the great poet he increased more practically the recognition of his merits in Germany. Strange that the poet of Agathon and of Musarion, the trifling, toying *cavalière servante* of the Graces, the hanger-on and imitator of the French, was the man who all at once grasped the British *earnestness* so powerfully that he himself raised on his shield the hero who was to put an end to his own supremacy.

The third great voice which rang for Shakespeare in Germany was that of our dearly-loved Herder, who declared himself with unconditional enthusiasm for the British bard. Goethe also paid him honour with a grand flourish on his trumpet; in short, it was an array of kings, who, one after the other, threw their votes into the urn, and elected William Shakespeare the Emperor of Literature.

This Emperor was already firmly seated on his throne when the knight August Wilhelm von Schlegel and his squire, Count Councillor Ludwig Tieck, succeeded in kissing his hand, and assured all the world that now his realm and reign were really sure—the thousand-year-long rule of the great William.



But it would be unjust should I deny to A. W. von Schlegel the merit which he won by his translation of Shakespeare's dramas, and his lectures on them. Honourably confessed the latter lack the philosophic basis, they sweep along too superficially in a frivolous diletantism, and certain ugly reserved reflections or back-thoughts came too visibly forward for me to pronounce unreserved praise over them. Herr A. W. von Schlegel's inspiration is always artificial, a deliberately intended shamming one's self into an intoxication without drunkenness; and with him, as with all the rest of the romantic school, the apotheosis of Shakespeare is indirectly meant for a degradation of Schiller. Schlegel's translation is certainly the best as yet, and fulfils every requisition which can be made for a metrical version. The feminine nature of his talents is here an admirable aid to the writer, and in his artistic ready skill without character, he can adapt himself admirably and accurately to the foreign spirit.

And yet I confess that, despite these merits, I often prefer to read the old translation of Eschenburg (which is all in prose) to that of Schlegel, and for these reasons:—

The language of Shakespeare is not peculiarly his own, but was derived from his predecessors and contemporaries; it is the traditional theatrical

language which the dramatic poet of those days must use, whether he found it fitted to his genius or not. One has only to look superficially over Dodsley's Collection of Old Plays, and observe that in all the tragedies and comedies of the time there prevails the same manner of speech, the same euphuism, the same exaggeration of refinement, the same forced meaning of words, and the same "conceits," jests, witty flourishes, and elaborate fancies which we find in Shakespeare, and which are blindly admired by men of small or narrow minds, but which are excused by the intelligent reader—when he does not blame them—as extraneous, or belonging to the conditions of an age which exacted them. Only in the passages where his highest revelations are shown, and where the whole genius of Shakespeare appears, does he voluntarily strip away that traditional language of the stage, and show himself in grandly beautiful nakedness, in a simplicity which vies with unadorned Nature and fills us with delighted awe.

Yes, in such passages Shakespeare manifests, even in language, a decided originality, but one which the metrical translator who comes limping along behind on the feet of the measure fitted to the thought cannot faithfully reflect. With such a translator these unusual passages are lost in the ordinary wheel-ruts of theatrical language, and even Schlegel cannot avoid this fate. But

why then take the trouble to translate metrically, when the best work of the poet is thereby lost and only the faulty reproduced. A prose translation which more easily reproduces the unadorned, plain, natural purity of certain passages therefore deserves preference to the metrical.<sup>1</sup>

While directly following Schlegel, Ludwig Tieck deserves credit as an elucidator of Shakespeare. This was set forth in his *Dramaturgic Pages*, which appeared fourteen years ago in the *Abendzeitung*, and which awoke the utmost interest in "the theatre-going public," as well as among actors. Unfortunately there prevails in these pages a wide-ranging or straying, wearisome, pedantic tone, which the delightful good-for-nothing, as Gutzkow called him, assumed with a certain lurking spirit of roguery. What he lacked in a knowledge of classic tongues, or even in philosophy, he made up in decorum and gravity, and we are reminded of Sir John in the chair, when he delivers his harangue to the Prince. But in spite of the puffed-out doctrinal gravity under which little Ludwig sought to conceal his philologic and philosophic deficiencies or *ignorantia*, there are

<sup>1</sup> Heine is here far too sweeping and "general," assuming that faults which are few and far between in Schlegel and Tieck's translation are universal. Nor is the principle absolutely true. Shelley's translation of a portion of Goethe's "Faust" is incomparably better than that of Hayward.

to be found here and there in these leaves the shrewdest comments on the character of the Shakespearean heroes, and ever and anon we find that poetic power of perception which we ever admired in his earlier writings, and recognised with joy.

Ah, this Tieck, who was once a poet, and reckoned, if not among the highest, at least with those who had the highest aims, how low has he fallen since then! How miserably mournful is the negligently reeled off task, which he gives us annually, compared to the free outpourings of his muse from the early moonlit time of Fairy Tale! As dear as he once was, even so repulsive is he now—the powerless Neidhart,<sup>1</sup> who calumniates the inspired sorrows of German youth in his gossiping novels. Unto him are truly applicable those words of Shakespeare:—

“For sweetest things turn sourest by their deeds :  
Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds.”<sup>2</sup>

Among the German commentators on the great poet, the late Franz Horn should not be omitted. His elucidations of Shakespeare are certainly the fullest, and are in five volumes. There is, indeed, in them the spirit of wit and intelligence, but it is a spirit so diluted and thinned down, that it is even less refreshing than the most spiritless narrow-mindedness. Strange that this man, who

<sup>1</sup> *Neidhart*, grudger, grumbler.

<sup>2</sup> *Sonnets*, xciv.

out of love for Shakespeare devoted a whole life to his study of him, and was one of his most zealous worshippers, was a pitifully petty pietist. But it may be that a sense of his own wretched weakness of soul awoke in him an endless amazement at Shakespeare's power, and so, whenever and anon the British Titan, in his most passionate scenes, piles Pelion on Ossa and storms the heights of heaven, then the poor elucidator in awe lets fall his pen and pauses, mildly sighing and grimacing. As a pietist he must naturally, according to his canting-pious nature, hate the poet whose soul, inspired with the spring-like air of the gods, breathes in every word the most joyous heathenism—yes, he should hate that believer in life, to whom the faith of death is in secret detestable, and who, revelling in the most enchanting delirium of antique heroic power, shuns the pitiful pleasures of humility, self-denial, and abasement! And yet he loves him all the same, and in his unwearied love would fain convert Shakespeare to the true Church; he comments a Christian sense into him—be it pious fraud or self-delusion; he finds this Christian feeling everywhere in Shakespeare's dramas, and the holy water of his commentary is also a bath of baptism in five volumes, which he pours on the head of the great heathen.

And yet, I repeat, these comments are not quite without wit and sense. Many a time Franz



Horn brings forth a happy thought,—then he makes wearisome, sweet-sourish grimaces, and groans and twists and twines himself round on the stool of childbirth; and when finally the clever idea has come to light, he looks at it with emotion and wearied smiles, like a midwife who has got through with her job. It is really both vexatious and amusing that just this weak and pious Franz commented Shakespeare. In a comedy by Grabbe the affair is delightfully reversed, and Shakespeare is represented in hell as writing explanations of Horn's works.<sup>1</sup>

But all the glosses and explanations and laborious laudation of commentators was of less practical use as regarded making Shakespeare known to the public than the inspired love with which talented actors produced his dramas, and thereby made them a subject for popular judgment. Lichtenberg, in his letters from England, gives us important intelligence as to the skill and method by which Shakespeare's characters were given on the London stage in the middle of the last century. I say characters—not the works in their fulness, since to this day British actors have only felt or known what is charac-

<sup>1</sup> *Scherz, Satire, Ironie und tiefere Bedeutung*. A comedy in three acts. Dramatic Works of Grabbe, vol. ii. The passage occurs in the second scene of act ii. p. 125.—*Note by the German Publisher.*

teristic, not the poetry, and still less the art. Such one-sidedness of apprehension is found, but in far more limited degree, among the commentators, who were never able to see through the dusty spectacles of erudition that which was the simplest and nearest, or the nature which was in Shakespeare's dramas. Garrick saw more clearly into the Shakespearean thoughts than did Dr. Johnson the John Bull of Learning, on whose nose Queen Mab doubtless cut the drollest capers while he wrote on the "Midsummer Night's Dream;" truly he never knew why he, when at work on Shakespeare, felt more tickling o' the nose and wish to sneeze than over any other poet whom he criticised.

While Dr. Johnson dissected the Shakespearean characters like dead corpses, dealing out thereby his dullest dogmatisms in Ciceronian English, balancing himself with heavy self-conceit on the antitheses of his Latin periods, Garrick on the stage thrilled all the people of England, as he called with thrilling invocation the dead to life, that they might set forth to all their fearful, bloody or gay, and festive work. But Garrick loved the great poet, and as reward for that love he lies buried in Westminster near the pedestal of Shakespeare's statue, like a faithful dog at the feet of his master.

We are indebted to the celebrated Schröder for

a transference of Garrick's acting to Germany. He also adapted several of Shakespeare's best dramas to the German stage. Like Garrick, Schröder understood neither the poetry nor art which is revealed in those dramas—he only cast an intelligent glance at the nature which expresses itself in them ; nor did he so much attempt to reproduce the charming harmony and inner perfection of a piece, as to give the single characters with the most one-sided truth to nature. I am guided in this opinion by the traditions of his plays as they are preserved till to-day in the Hamburg theatre, and also his "make up" of the dramas for the stage, in which all poetry and art are wiped out, and in which only a certain generally attainable naturalness and sharp outline of character appears to be developed by a combination of the most striking traits.

The method of the great Devrient was developed out of this system of naturalness. I saw him once at Berlin at the same time with the great Wolf, who, however, in his play manifested a deeper feeling for art. But though they took opposite directions—one from nature, the other from art—both were one in poetry, and they thrilled or enraptured the souls of their audience by the most dissimilar methods.

The muses of music and of painting have done less than might have been expected to exalt

Shakespeare. Were they envious of their sisters Melpomene and Thalia, who won their most immortal<sup>1</sup> wreaths by means of the great Briton. With the exception of *Romeo and Juliet* and *Othello*, no play by Shakespeare has inspired any composer of any note to any great creation. The value of those sweetly sounding flowers which sprung from the exulting nightingale heart of Zingarelli I need not praise, any more than those sweetest sounds with which the swan of Pesaro sung the bleeding tenderness of Desdemona, and the black flames of her lover! Painting, and especially the arts of design, have still more scantily sustained the fame of our poet. The so-called Shakespeare gallery in Pall Mall shows a good will, but at the same time the chilly weakness of British painters. There we see sober portrayals, quite in the spirit of the old French school, but without the taste which the latter never quite lost. There is something in which the English are as ridiculous bunglers as in music. That is, painting.<sup>2</sup> Only in portraits have they shown the world anything remarkable, and when they execute them with the graver—not with

<sup>1</sup> *Unsterblichsten!*

<sup>2</sup> As Heine generally wrote intelligently and well on art, I can only attribute the absolute absurdity of this sweeping remark to great ignorance. He might with quite as much truth have extended the remark to British engraving.—*Translator.*

colours—they surpass the artists of the rest of Europe. What can the cause be that the English, to whom sense of colour is so scantily allotted, are still the most remarkable draughtsmen and produce masterpieces of copper and steel engraving? That this last remark is shown by the portraits of Women and Maidens from the dramas of Shakespeare which are given with this work.<sup>1</sup> Their superior excellence requires no comment, but the question or subject here is not of comment at all. These pages are only intended as a fleeting introduction or greeting to the delightful work, as use and custom go. I am the porter who opens this gallery to you, and what you have so far heard is only the rattling of my keys. And while I lead you round I shall often intrude a brief word of gossip on your reflections, and often imitate the cicerone who never allows a man to become too deeply inspired amid his own reflections while looking at a picture, and is ever ready with a trivial word to wake you from your contemplative dream.

In any case, I trust with this publication to cause some pleasure to my friends at home. May the sight of these beautiful women's faces drive from their brows the shadows, which at present have only too much cause to be there! Ah that

<sup>1</sup> The original German edition was accompanied by forty-five steel engravings, illustrating the text.—*Translator.*



I could offer you more substantial consolation than is afforded by these shadowy forms of beauty!—alas that I cannot give you the rosy reality! Once I would fain have broken the halberds with which the Gardens of Delight are guarded; but my hand was too weak, and the halberdiers laughed and thrust their points against my breast, and the too forward, great-souled heart was silent for shame, if it was not from fear. Ye sigh!



TRAGEDIES.



## CRESSIDA.

[TROILUS AND CRESSIDA.]

It is the strictly honourable daughter of the priest Calchas whom I here present to the most honourable public. Pandarus was her uncle, a most admirable pander indeed; but his active aid, as regarded his calling, was here hardly called for. Troilus, a son of the very productive Priam, was her first lover. She fulfilled with him all the usual formalities, swore him endless truth, broke her oath with befitting propriety, and delivered a mournful monologue on the weakness of the female heart before transferring herself to Diomed. The eavesdropper Thersites, who ever ungallantly calls a spade a spade, speaks of her as a strumpet; but he should certainly have softened the word, for it may come to pass that the beauty, transferred from one hero to another, and ever sinking lower, will at last fall as a sweetheart to him.

Not without good and many reasons have I placed the portrait of Cressida at the portal of this gallery. Truly it was not for her virtue, and not because she is a type of the ordinary average woman, did I give her preference to so



many glorious and ideal forms of Shakespeare's art; no—I opened the dance with that dame of dubious fame because I, should I publish Shakespeare's works, would begin with the drama entitled *Troilus and Cressida*. Steevens, in his magnificent edition, did the same; I do not know why, but I conjecture that this English publisher had a reason, which I will here set forth.

*Troilus and Cressida* is the only drama by Shakespeare in which he puts upon the stage the same heroes which the Greek poets also chose for a subject of their dramas, so that the method of Shakespeare is very clearly revealed by comparison with the manner and style in which the elder poets treated the same theme. While the classical poets of Greece strove for the most elevated transfigurations of real life and soared to ideality, our modern tragedian penetrates more into the depth of things, digging with a sharply whetted spiritual spade into the silent soil of *what appears* to be, and lays bare before us its hidden roots. In opposition to the ancient tragedians who, like the sculptors of their time, only aimed at beauty and nobility, and glorified the form at the expense of the subject, Shakespeare directed his views first to truth and the thing in itself, hence his mastery of the characteristic, whence it comes that he often touches on the most provoking caricature,

and strips the glittering armour from his heroes, showing them in the most ridiculous of dressing-gowns. Therefore critics who judge of *Troilus and Cressida* by the principles which Aristotle drew from the greatest dramas of Greece, must fall into great perplexity, if not into the absurdest errors. As a tragedy the piece was not sufficiently serious or sad, because everything in it went so naturally from the beginning, just as in our own life, and the heroes behaved just as stupidly, not to say vulgarly, as we ourselves do—and the hero is a puppy, and the heroine just such a common bit of calico<sup>1</sup> as we have met many a time among our most intimate acquaintances. Even the most famed bearers of great names, renowned in the heroic olden time, for example, the great Achilles, the brave son of Thetis—how wretchedly they seem before us here! And yet, on the other hand, the piece cannot be treated as a comedy, for the blood flows through it in tremendous stream, and the longest speeches of wisdom ring therein with grand dignity—as, for instance, in the remarks which Ulysses makes as to the necessity of Authority, and which to this day deserve the most serious consideration.

“No, no—a play in which such speeches are

<sup>1</sup> “Der Hauptheld ist ein Laps und die Heldin eine gewöhnliche Schürze.” *Schürze* is literally a petticoat; jocosely, a girl or woman.

interchanged can be no comedy," said the critics; and still less could they admit that a poor rogue, who, like the teacher of gymnastics, Massmann, had small Latin and less Greek,<sup>1</sup> could dare be so bold as to use the great classic heroes to a comedy.

No, *Troilus and Cressida* is neither a comedy nor tragedy, in the common sense of the words; it does not belong to any determined class of the drama, and still less can it be measured with the current standard rules—it is Shakespeare's own and most peculiar creation. We can only in general principles recognise its eminent excellence; for a close criticism of it we need an Aesthetic, which is not as yet written.

Since I have registered this drama under the heading of Tragedy, let me first show how strictly I hold to the title. My old teacher of poetry in the gymnasium of Düsseldorf once remarked very shrewdly that all plays in which the melancholy of Melpomene prevailed over the gay and joyous spirit of Thalia, belonged to the realm of tragedy. Perhaps I had that comprehensive definition in my mind when it occurred to me to place *Troilus and Cressida* among the tragedies. And in truth there prevails in it an exultant bitterness, a world-mocking irony, such as we never met in

<sup>1</sup> This was originally said of Shakespeare himself by Ben Jonson. In Heine's text it reads, "Blutwenig Latein und gar kein Griechisch."—*Translator*.

the merriment of the comic muse. It is the tragic goddess who is very much more before us in this play, only that she here would fain be gay for once, and move to mirth. It is as if we saw Melpomene at a grisette-ball, dancing the *chahut*, bold laughter on her pale lips and death in her heart.

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## CASSANDRA.

[TROILUS AND CRESSIDA.]

It is the prophetic daughter of Priam whose picture is here presented. She bears in her heart the awful foreknowledge of the future, she announces the fall of Troy, and now she stands and wails where Hector weapons himself to battle with the dreadful Pelides. She sees in the spirit her beloved brother bleeding from the open wound of death, she groans and grieves—in vain! No one heeds her counsel, and as hopeless of rescue as the whole deluded race, she sinks into the abyss of a dark destiny.

Shakespeare gives the beautiful seeress scanty and not very significant speech; she is to him only an ordinary prophetess of evil who, with her

cries of woe, sweeps about in the outlawed town—

“ Her eyes madly rolling,  
Her hair wildly flying,”

as the picture indicates.

Our great Schiller has exalted her in more attractive form in one of his sweetest poems. Here she laments to the Pythian god, with the keenest cutting tones of grief, that fearful fate which he holds over his priestess. Once I had to declaim in school in public trial that poem, and I stopped and could get no further than the words—

“ What avails to lift the curtain,  
Hiding danger dire and dread ?  
Life's an error—that is certain,  
Knowledge puts us with the dead.”

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## HELENA.

[TROIILUS AND CRESSIDA.]

THIS is the beautiful Helen, whose whole history I cannot tell, or make clear; for then I must really begin with Leda's egg.

Her titular father was called Tyndarus, but her real and secret begetter was a god, who in

the form of a fowl fructified her blessed mother—as very often took place in the olden time. Married when very young, she went to Sparta, and, as is easy to suppose, was there, owing to her extraordinary beauty soon seduced, and cuckolded her husband Menelaus.

Ladies—the one among you who is perfectly conscious of purity, will please cast the first stone at the poor sister! I do not say here that there can be no really true women. The first wife, the celebrated Eve, was a pattern of conjugal fidelity. Without the least idea of adultery, she wandered in Eden by the side of her husband (the celebrated Adam), who was then the only man in the world, and wore an apron of fig leaves. She conversed willingly with the Serpent, but that was only to learn the beautiful French language, which she thereby acquired, because she was *so* desirous of culture. Oh, ye daughters of Eve, what a beautiful example did your first mother leave behind her!

Dame Venus, the undying goddess of all delight, managed for Prince Paris the favour of fair Helen; he violated the holy law of hospitality, and fled with his charming booty of beauty to Troy—the safe citadel—as we all under the same circumstances should doubtless have done.<sup>1</sup> We all, by which I specially mean we Germans,

<sup>1</sup> We, *id est*, I (*Heine*).—*Translator*.



who, being more learned than other races, busy ourselves more from youth upwards with Homer's songs. The beautiful Helen is our first love, and even in our boyhood's days, when we sit on the school-bench and the master explains to us the exquisite Greek verses in which the Trojan grey-beards were enraptured at the sight of Helen, the most enchanting feelings beat in our young inexperienced breasts—with blushing cheeks and stammering tongues we answer the questions in grammar put by our preceptor. Later in life, when we are older and fully taught, and have ourselves become wizards, and can raise the very devil himself, then we exact from our attendant sprite that he shall obtain for us the beautiful Helen from Sparta. I have already said<sup>1</sup> that John Faust is the true representative of the Germans, of the people, who satisfy their deepest longing in knowledge and not in life. Although this famed doctor—the normal German—craves and yearns for sensual pleasure, he by no means seeks the subject of his gratification in the flowery fields of reality, but in the learned mould of the world of books; and while a French or Italian necromancer would have demanded of Mephistopheles the fairest woman living, the German wants one who died thousands of years

<sup>1</sup> In referring to Goethe's Faust. Romantic School, first book.—*Note by the German Publisher.*

ago, and who smiles at him as a lovely shade from ancient Greek parchment times—the Helen of Sparta. How deeply and significantly does this yearning set forth the inner being of the German people!

In *Troilus and Cressida* Shakespeare has treated of Helen as sparingly as he did Cassandra in the previous chapter. We see her appear with Paris, and she exchanges with the grey-haired pander, Pandarus, a few lively mocking passages. She rallies him, and at last asks that he shall sing, with his old bleating voice, a love-song. But sad, sorrowful shadows of forebodings, the foregoing feelings of a terrible end, often come before her frivolous heart; the serpents stretch out their black heads from the rosiest jests, and she betrays her deeper feeling in the words:—

“Let thy song be love. This love will undo us all. O Cupid! Cupid! Cupid!”<sup>1</sup>

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## VIRGILIA.

[CORIOLANUS.]

SHE, the wife of Coriolanus, is a shy dove who dares not so much as coo in the presence of her over-

<sup>1</sup> *Troilus and Cressida*, act iii. sc. 1.

haughty husband. When he returns victorious from the field, and all is exultation and loud rejoicing over him, she in humility looks down, and the smiling hero calls her "My gracious Silence!"<sup>1</sup> In this silence lies her whole character; she is silent as the blushing rose, as the chaste pearl, as the yearning evening star, as the enraptured human heart—a perfect, precious, glowing silence, which tells more than eloquence, more than all rhetorical bombast.<sup>2</sup> She is an ever mild and modest dame; and in her tender loveliness forms the clearest contrast to her mother-in-law, the Roman she-wolf Volumnia, who once suckled with her iron milk the wolf Caius Marcius. Yes, the latter is the real matron, and from her aristocratic nipples the young brood sucked nothing but wild self-will, unbridled defiance, and scorn of the people.

How a hero may win the laurel crown of fame from the early imbibing of such virtues and vices, but on the other hand lose the civic oaken wreath,

<sup>1</sup> *Coriolanus*, act ii. sc. 1.

" My gracious Silence, hail !  
 Wouldst thou have laugh'd had I come coffin'd home,  
 That weep'st to see me triumph ? Ah, my dear,  
 Such eyes the widows in Corioli wear,  
 And mothers that lack sons."

<sup>2</sup> *Wortschwall*, bounding billows of talk. "But 'rigmarole' I deem the better word."—*Translator*.

and finally descending to the most atrocious crime, or treason to his native land, disgracefully perish, is shown by Shakespeare in his drama entitled *Coriolanus*.

After *Troilus and Cressida*, in which our poet took his material from the old Greek heroic time, I take up *Coriolanus*, because we here see how he understood treating Roman affairs. In this drama he sketches the partisan strife of the patricians and plebeians in ancient Rome.

I will not directly assert that this portrayal agrees exactly in every detail with the annals of Roman history; but our poet has understood and depicted the real life and nature of that strife with deepest truthfulness. We can judge of this the more accurately because our own times afford so many subjects which recall those of the troubled discord which once raged in old Rome between the privileged patricians and the degraded plebeians. We might often deem that Shakespeare was a poet of the present day, who lived in the London of our own life, sketching the Tories and Radicals of our own time disguised as Romans. What might confirm us in such a fancy is the great resemblance which really exists between the ancient Romans and modern Englishmen, and the statesmen of both races. In fact, a certain prosaic hardness, greed, love of blood, unwearying perseverance and firmness of character, is as

peculiar to the English of to-day as to the old Romans, only that the latter were more land-rats than water-rats; but in the *unamiableness*, in which both attained the utmost height, they are perfectly equal and alike. The most striking elective affinity is to be observed between the nobility of both races.<sup>1</sup> The English nobleman, like the same character of yore in Rome, is patriotic; love for his native land keeps him, in spite of all political-legal differences, intimately allied to the plebeian, and this sympathetic bond so brings it about that the English aristocrats and democrats, like the Romans before them, form one and an united race. In other countries where nobility is bound, less to the land than to the person of him who is their prince, or are devoted to the peculiar interests of their class, this is not the case. Then again we find among the English, as once among the Roman nobles, a striving towards established authority as the highest, most glorious, and also indirectly the most profitable—I say *indirectly* the most profitable, because, as once in Rome, so now in England, the management of the highest offices under government are made profitable only by misuse of influence and

<sup>1</sup> These are true comparisons on the whole. Many years ago I remarked the astonishing likeness between many busts of old Romans of the better class and certain modern Englishmen.—*Translator.*



traditional exactions, that is to say, indirectly. Those offices are the aim of youthful education in the great families of England, just as they were among the Romans, and with the one as with the other, skill in war and oratory avail as the means to future position. So among the English, as it was among the Romans, the tradition of reigning and of administration is the hereditary endowment of noble families, and through this it may be that the English Tories will long be indispensable—yes, and so long in power as were the senatorial families of old Rome.

But nothing under present circumstances in England is so resemblant as the “soliciting suffrages,” as we see it depicted in *Coriolanus*. With what bitter and restrained sourness, with what scornful irony, does the Roman Tory beg for the votes of the good citizens whom he so deeply despises in his soul, and whose approbation is to him so absolutely necessary that he may become consul. There being, however, this difference—that most English lords have got their wounds, not in battle but in fox-hunting, and being better trained by their mothers in the art of dissimulation, do not when electioneering manifest their ill-temper and scorn as did the stubborn *Coriolanus*.

As in all things, Shakespeare has exercised in



this drama the strictest impartiality. The aristocrat is here quite in the right when he despises his plebeian masters of votes, for he feels that he was braver in war—such bravery being among the Romans the greatest virtue. Yet the poor electors, the people, are withal quite right in opposing him, despite this virtue, for he distinctly declared that as consul he would oppose giving bread to the people, although bread is the people's first right.<sup>1</sup>

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PORTIA.

[JULIUS CÆSAR.]

THE chief basis of Cæsar's popularity was the magnanimity with which he treated the people, and his generosity. The multitude felt that in him might be the founder of those better days which they were to know under his descendants the Emperors; for these secured to the people its just right—they gave them their daily bread. We willingly forgive the Cæsars the bloodiest caprices by which they arbitrarily disposed of hundreds of patrician families and mocked their

<sup>1</sup> Heine here indicates an opinion, which he manifests in other passages of his works, that the rich possess, and keep from the poor, abundant means to support the latter.—*Translator*.

privileges; we recognise in them, and that gratefully, the destroyers of that aristocratic rule which gave the people for the hardest service the least possible payment; we praise them as worldly saviours who, humiliating the lofty and exalting the lowly, introduced a civic equality. That advocate of the past, the patrician Tacitus, may describe as he will the private vices and mad freaks of the Cæsars with the most poetic poison, we know better things of them—they fed the people.<sup>1</sup>

It was Cæsar who led the Roman aristocracy to ruin, and prepared the victory of democracy. Meanwhile there were many old patricians who still cherished in their hearts the spirit of republicanism; they could not endure the supremacy of a single man, they would not live where one raised his head above all theirs, even though it were the lordly head of Julius Cæsar—so they whetted their daggers and slew him.

Democracy and monarchy are not enemies, as people falsely assert, in these our times. The best democracy will ever be that where one person stands as incarnation of the popular will at the

<sup>1</sup> That is to say that on the evil principle of unlimited "out-of-door relief," they, like the monks of later date with their doles, deliberately created an army of incurable paupers, who were thereby forced into being retainers and partisans. They plundered the world to feed a lazy mob of Roman citizens.—*Translator.*

head of the state, like God at the head of the world's government, for under that incarnate will of the people, as under the majesty of God, blooms the safest human equality, the truest democracy. Aristocracy and republicanism are not really opposed to one another, and that we see most clearly in the drama before us, where the spirit of republicanism speaks directly out with its sharpest traits of character in the proudest aristocrats. These traits are even more marked in Cassius than in Brutus. We have long since observed that the spirit of republicanism consists in a certain asthmatic close jealousy which will tolerate nothing over itself, in a dwarfish envy which hates all that is higher than itself, which would not willingly see even virtue represented by a man, for fear lest such a representative would turn his high personality to private profit. The republicans are therefore today the humblest of deists, and see in humanity only paltry figures of clay, which, kneaded all in one common likeness by the hands of a Creator, have no right whatever to proud distinctions and ambitions, or displays of splendour. The English republicans once cherished such a principle in Puritanism, and such was the case with the old Romans, who were Stoics. If this be borne in mind, we cannot fail to be struck by the shrewd sagacity with which Shakespeare has

sketched Cassius in his dialogue with Brutus, when he hears how the people have greeted with hurrahs Cæsar, whom they wish to raise to kingship:—

“*Cas.* I know that virtue to be in you, Brutus,  
 As well as I do know your outward favour.  
 Well, honour is the subject of my story.—  
 I cannot tell, what you and other men  
 Think of this life ; but, for my single self,  
 I had as lief not be, as live to be  
 In awe of such a thing as I myself.  
 I was born free as Cæsar ; so were you :  
 We both have fed as well ; and we can both  
 Endure the winter’s cold as well as he :  
 For once, upon a raw and gusty day,  
 The troubled Tiber chafing with her shores,  
 Cæsar said to me, *Dar’st thou, Cassius, now  
 Leap in with me into this angry flood,  
 And swim to yonder point ?*—Upon the word,  
 Accouter’d as I was, I plung’d in,  
 And bade him follow ; so, indeed, he did.  
 The torrent roar’d ; and we did buffet it  
 With lusty sinews ; throwing it aside,  
 And stemming it, with hearts of controversy.  
 But ere we could arrive the point proposed,  
 Cæsar cried, *Help me, Cassius, or I sink.*  
 I, as Æneas, our great ancestor,  
 Did from the flames of Troy upon his shoulder  
 The old Anchises bear, so, from the waves of Tiber  
 Did I the tirèd Cæsar : And this man  
 Is now become a god ; and Cassius is  
 A wretched creature, and must bend his body,  
 If Cæsar carelessly but nod on him.

He had a fever when he was in Spain,  
 And, when the fit was on him, I did mark  
 How he did shake : 'tis true, this god did shake :  
 His coward lips did from their colour fly ;  
 And that same eye, whose bend doth awe the world,  
 Did lose his lustre : I did hear him groan :  
 Ay, and that tongue of his, that bade the Romans  
 Mark him, and write his speeches in their books,  
 Alas ! it cried, *Give me some drink, Titinius,*  
 As a sick girl. Ye gods, it doth amaze me,  
 A man of such a feeble temper should  
 So get the start of the majestic world,  
 And bear the palm alone."

Cæsar himself knows his man well, and on this subject lets fall deeply significant words in a dialogue with Anthony.

" *Cæs.* Let me have men about me that are fat ;  
 Sleek-headed men, and such as sleep o' nights :  
 Yond Cassius has a lean and hungry look ;  
 He thinks too much : such men are dangerous.

*Ant.* Fear him not, Cæsar, he's not dangerous ;  
 He is a noble Roman, and well given.

*Cæs.* 'Would he were fatter :—But I fear him not :  
 Yet if my name were liable to fear,  
 I do not know the man I should avoid  
 So soon as that spare Cassius. He reads much ;  
 He is a great observer, and he looks  
 Quite through the deeds of men : he loves no plays,  
 As thou dost, Antony ; he hears no music ;  
 Seldom he smiles ; and smiles in such a sort,  
 As if he mock'd himself, and scorn'd his spirit  
 That could be moved to smile at any thing.

Such men as he be never at heart's ease,  
Whiles they behold a greater than themselves ;  
And therefore are they very dangerous."

Cassius is a republican, and, as we often see in such men, is more attracted by noble friendship in men than by the tender love of women. Brutus, on the contrary, sacrifices himself for the republic—not because he is by nature a republican, but because he is a hero of virtue, and sees in sacrifice the highest demand of duty. He is susceptible to all soft feelings, and clings with tenderest love to his wife, Portia.

Portia, a daughter of Cato, altogether a Roman woman, is, however, worthy of love, and even in her highest flights of heroism betrays the most feminine feeling and shrewdest womanly nature. With anxious looks of love she watches every shadow on the brow of her husband, betraying his troubled thoughts. She will know what torments him, she *will* share the burden of the secret which oppresses his soul ; and when at last she knows it, she is after all a woman, and being well nigh conquered by the frightful care, cannot conceal it, and must needs confess.

" I have a man's mind, but a woman's might.  
How hard it is for a woman to keep counsel ! "

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## CLEOPATRA.

[ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA.]

YES, this is the famed Queen of Egypt who ruined Antony.

He knew perfectly that this woman was leading him to destruction, and he would fain tear himself away from the magic fetters :—

“ I must with haste from hence ! ”

He flies—only to return all the sooner to the flesh-pots of Egypt, to his serpent of old Nile, as he calls her ; soon finding himself again with her in the luxurious mud of Alexandria, and there, as Octavius relates—

“ I’ the market-place, on a tribunal silver’d,  
 Cleopatra and himself in chairs of gold  
 Were publicly enthron’d : at the feet sat  
 Cæsarion, whom they call my father’s son,  
 And all the unlawful issue, that their lust  
 Since then hath made between them. Unto her  
 He gave the ’stablishment of Egypt ; made her  
 Of lower Syria, Cyprus, Lydia,  
 Absolute queen. . . .  
 I’ the common show-place, where they exercise,  
 His sons he there proclaim’d the kings of kings :  
 Great Media, Parthia, and Armenia,  
 He gave to Alexander ; to Ptolemy he assign’d  
 Syria, Cilicia, and Phœnicia : she

In the habiliments of the goddess Isis  
That day appear'd ; and oft before gave audience,  
As 'tis reported, so.<sup>1</sup>

The Egyptian sorceress holds not only his hand captive, but even his brain, and bewilders his talent as a general. Instead of fighting on firm land where he had always conquered, he gives battle on the treacherous sea, where his bravery was of less avail ; and there, where the capricious woman obstinately followed him, she fled with all her ships in the critical instant of the combat, and Anthony, "like a doting mallard,"<sup>2</sup> with outspread sail-wings fled after her, leaving fortune and honour in the lurch.

But it was not merely from the womanish caprices of Cleopatra that the unfortunate hero suffered the most disgraceful defeat ; for she afterwards treated him with the blackest treason, and in complicity with Octavius went with her whole fleet over to the enemy. She betrayed him in the most despicable manner, either to save her own goods in the shipwreck of his fortunes, or to fish some greater advantage for herself out of the troubled waters. She drives him to despair and death by deceit and lies, and yet to the very last he loves her with all his heart—yes, after every treachery his love flashes up the more wildly.

<sup>1</sup> *Antony and Cleopatra*, act iii. sc. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, act iii. sc. 8.

He curses her of course after every trick, he knows all her faults, and his better judgment expresses itself in the coarsest abuse, when he says with bitterest truth :—

“ You were half blasted ere I knew you :—Ha ?  
 Have I my pillow, left unpress'd in Rome,  
 Forborne the getting of a lawful race,  
 And by a gem of women, to be abused  
 By one that looks on feeders ?

*Cleo.* Good my lord,—

*Ant.* You have been a boggler ever :—  
 But when we in our viciousness grow hard,  
 (O misery on't ! ) the wise gods seal our eyes ;  
 In our own filth drop our clear judgments ; make us  
 Adore our errors ; laugh at us, while we strut  
 To our confusion.

*Cleo.* O is it come to this ?

*Ant.* I found you as a morsel, cold upon  
 Dead Cæsar's trencher : nay, you were a fragment  
 Of Cneius Pompey's ; besides what hotter hours,  
 Unregister'd in vulgar fame, you have  
 Luxuriously pick'd out :—For, I am sure,  
 Though you can guess what temperance should be,  
 You know not what it is.”<sup>1</sup>

But like the spear of Achilles, which could heal the wounds which it gave, the mouth of the beloved one can heal again with its kisses the deadliest stabs which his sharp words had given to her feelings. And after that infamy which the serpent of old Nile had inflicted on the Roman

<sup>1</sup> *Antony and Cleopatra*, act. iii. sc. 11.

wolf, and after every curse which he had howled at her—the pair kiss *à la Florentine* the more tenderly,<sup>1</sup> even in dying he presses on her lips the last of so many kisses.

And she, the Egyptian snake, how she loves her Roman wolf! Her betrayals are only the external irrepressible twinings and coils of her evil serpent nature; she practises them mechanically, because they are in her inborn or habitual habit, but in the depth of her soul there is the deepest unchanging love for Antony. Yes, she herself knows not how strong it is. Many a time she thinks she can conquer or play with it, but she errs, and the error will appear to her at the moment when she loses the man whom she loves, and her agony bursts forth in the sublime words:—

“*Cleo.* I dream’d, there was an emperor Antony;—  
O, such another sleep, that I might see  
But such another man!

*Dol.* If it might please you,—

*Cleo.* His face was as the heavens; and therein stuck  
A sun, and moon; which kept their course, and lighted  
The little O, the earth.

*Dol.* Most sovereign creature,—

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<sup>1</sup> *Züngeln*, to kiss, touching the tongues together—the *baïstr à la Florentine*. In that remarkable work, *Delle Bizzarerie Accademiche*, by Gio. Francesco Loredano, Venice, 1667, there is a chapter on this subject, but according to him this peculiar osculation is effected by holding the ears of the subject, and kissing lip to lip. French writers define it as I have done.

*Cleo.* His legs bestrid the ocean : his rear'd arm  
 Crested the world : his voice was propertied  
 As all the tuned spheres, and that to friends ;  
 But when he meant to quail and shake the orb,  
 He was as rattling thunder. For his bounty,  
 There was no winter in 't, an autumn 'twas,  
 That grew the more by reaping : His delights  
 Were dolphin-like ; they show'd his back above  
 The element they lived in : In his livery  
 Walk'd crowns and crownets ; realms and islands were  
 As plates dropp'd from his pocket. " 1

For Cleopatra is—a woman. She loves and betrays at the same time. It is a mistake to believe that women when they betray us have ceased to love. They only follow their inborn nature ; and if they will not empty the forbidden cup, they like at least a sip from it, or lick the brim, just to see what poison tastes like. Next to Shakespeare, no one has sketched this fact so well as old Abbé Prevost in his novel "Manon Lescaut." The intuition of the greatest poet here coincides with the sober observation of the coldest writer of prose.

Yes, this Cleopatra is a woman in the blessedest and cursedest sense of the word ! She reminds me of that saying of Lessing, " When God made woman He took clay of too fine a quality ! " The extreme tenderness of His material does not agree with the requirements of life. This creature is at

1 *Antony and Cleopatra*, act v. sc. 2.

once too good and too bad for this world. The most charming attractions are here the cause of the most repulsive frailties. With enchanting truth Shakespeare sketches even at the first appearance of Cleopatra the variegated fluttering spirit of caprice which is always rioting in the brain of the beautiful queen, which often jets and sprays in the most notable questions and fancies, and is perhaps really the basis of all her actions and behaviour. Nothing is more characteristic than the fifth scene of the first act, where she asks her maid for mandragora, so that this narcotic may fill up her time while Antony is gone. Then the devil teases her to call her eunuch Mardian. He humbly asks what his mistress requires. I will not hear singing, she says, for naught that an eunuch can do pleases me now ; but tell me, Dost ever feel passion? "Hast thou affections?"

*Mar.* Yes, gracious madam.

*Cleo.* Indeed?

*Mar.* Not in deed, madam, for I can do nothing  
But what, in deed, is honest to be done :  
Yet have I fierce affections, and think,  
What Venus did with Mars.

*Cleo.* O Charmian,  
Where think'st thou he is now ? Stands he, or sits he ?  
Or does he walk ? or is he on his horse ?  
O happy horse, to bear the weight of Antony !  
Do bravely, horse ! for wot'st thou whom thou mov'st ?



The demi-Atlas of this earth, the arm  
 And burgonet of men.—He's speaking now,  
 Or murmuring, *Where's my serpent of old Nile?*  
 For so he calls me; Now I feed myself  
 With most delicious poison:—Think on me,  
 That am with Phœbus' amorous pinches black,  
 And wrinkled deep in time? Broad-fronted Cæsar,  
 When thou wast here above the ground, I was  
 A morsel for a monarch: and great Pompey  
 Would stand, and make his eyes grow in my brow;  
 There would he anchor his aspect, and die  
 With looking on his life."<sup>1</sup>

If I may boldly speak out all my thought, fearing no slanderous sarcastic smiles, I would say that, candidly confessed, this helter-skelter thought and feeling of Cleopatra—the result of an irregular, idle, and troubled life—reminds me of a certain class of spendthrift women, whose expensive housekeeping is defrayed by an out-of-wedlock generosity, and who torment and bless their titular spouses very often with love and fidelity; though not seldom with love alone, but always with wild whims. And was she in reality different from them—this Cleopatra, who could not maintain her unheard-of luxury with the Egyptian crown-revenue, and who took from Antony, her Roman *entreteneur*, the squeezed-out treasures of whole provinces for “presents”—and in the true sense of the word, was a kept—queen!

<sup>1</sup> *Antony and Cleopatra*, act i. sc. 5.

In the ever excited, irregular mind of Cleopatra, made of extremes tossed together by reckless chance, a soul oppressively sultry, there flashes like heat-lightning all the time a sensuous, wild, and brimstone-yellow wit, which rather frightens than pleases. Plutarch gives us an idea of this wit, which shows itself more in deeds than words, and even in school I laughed with all my heart at the mystified Antony, who went with his queenly love fishing, but drew up on his line a salt fish—the crafty Egyptian dame having employed divers, one of whom had fastened it on his hook. Our teacher indeed frowned at this anecdote, and blamed the wicked wantonness with which the queen risked the lives of her subjects, the poor divers, to carry out a jest; but our teacher was not a friend to Cleopatra, and he made us specially observe how Antony, through her, destroyed his whole public career, got himself involved in domestic difficulties, and at last plunged headlong into ruin.

Yes, my old teacher was quite right—it is utterly dangerous to enter into intimate relations with such a person as Cleopatra. A hero can go to the devil in this way, but only a hero. Good commonplaceness suffers no danger here—nor anywhere.

The *position* of Cleopatra was as intensely droll as her character. This capricious-peevish,

pleasure-seeking, weather-vain, feverishly coquet-  
 tish woman, this Parisienne of the olden time,  
 this goddess of life, juggled and ruled over Egypt,  
 the stark silent land of the dead. You know  
 it well, that Egypt, that Mizraim full of mystery,  
 that narrow Nile strip, looking like a coffin. In  
 the high reeds still grinned the crocodile or the  
 deserted child of Revelation. . . . Rock temples  
 with colossal pillars, on which recline grotesque  
 wild forms of horribly varied hues . . . in the  
 portal nods the monk of Isis, with hieroglyphed  
 head-gear . . . in luxurious villas, mummies are  
 taking their siestas, and the gilded masks protect  
 them from the swarms of flies of decay . . . there  
 stand the slender obelisks and plump pyramids,  
 like silent thoughts . . . in the background we  
 are greeted by the mountains of the Moon of  
 Ethiopia, which hide the sources of the Nile—  
 everywhere death, stone, and mystery. And over  
 this land, the beautiful Cleopatra ruled as queen.

How witty God is!

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*LAVINIA.*

[TITUS ANDRONICUS.]

IN Julius Cæsar we see the last throbs of the  
 republican spirit, which struggles in vain with

the monarchy; the republic has outlived itself, and Brutus and Cassius can only murder the man who first grasped at the royal crown, but are in no degree able to kill the royal form of government which is deeply rooted in the needs of the age. In *Antony and Cleopatra* we see how, in place of a fallen Cæsar, three other Cæsars stretch forth daring hands to the sovereignty of the world, the problem of principles is solved, and the strife which breaks out between these *triumvirs* is only the personal question, "Who shall be Emperor, lord of all men and lands?" The tragedy entitled *Titus Andronicus* shows us that even unlimited autocracies in the Roman realm follow the law of all earthly events, that is, to pass into decay, and nothing is more repulsive than those later Cæsars who, to the madness and crimes of Nero and Caligula, added the windiest weakness. Nero and Caligula indeed grew giddy on the vast height of their power; thinking themselves above humanity they became inhuman, believing they were gods they became godless; but in contemplating their monstrosity we can no longer measure them with the rule of reason. The later Cæsars, on the contrary, are rather subjects of our pity, our dislike, our disgust; they are wanting in the heathen self-deification, the intoxication of a sense of their own majesty, their terrible irresponsibility;

they are Christianly crushed, and the black confessor has crept into their consciences and spoken, and they feel that they are only poor worms, that they die dependent on the grace of a higher God, and that they in due time for their earthly evil doings must be boiled and roasted in hell.

Although the outer stamp of heathendom still prevails in *Titus Andronicus*, still the character of the later Christian time begins to show itself in this piece, and the perversion in moral and civic relations which it displays is already quite Byzantine. The play certainly belongs to Shakespeare's earliest productions, though many critics deny it to him altogether; for there is in it that cruelty, that cutting predilection for the repulsive, a Titanic struggle with divine powers, such as we are wont to find in the first works of great poets. The hero, in opposition to his utterly demoralised surroundings, is a real Roman, a relic of the stern and hard old time. Did such men then still exist? It is possible, for Nature loves to preserve examples of all the creatures whose kind is perishing or undergoing change, though it be in petrifications, such as we find on mountain-tops. Titus Andronicus is such a petrified Roman, and his fossil virtue is a real curiosity in the time of the latest Cæsars.

The disgrace and mutilation of his daughter Lavinia belongs to the most horrible scenes to be



found in any author. The history of Philomela, in Ovid's "Metamorphoses," is not by far so awful, for the very hands of the wretched Roman maiden are hacked off lest she should betray the prime movers of the dreadful piece of wickedness. As the father by his stern manliness, so the daughter by her grand feminine dignity, reminds us of the more moral past; she dreads not death but dishonour; and deeply touching are the words with which she implores mercy of her enemy, the Empress Tamora, when the sons of the latter will defile her person:—

"'Tis present death I beg; and one thing more,  
That womanhood denies my tongue to tell:  
O, keep me from their worse than killing lust,  
And tumble me into some loathsome pit,  
Where never man's eyes may behold my body:  
Do this, and be a charitable murderer."<sup>1</sup>

In this virginal purity Lavinia forms the fullest contrast to the Empress Tamora; and here, as in most of his dramas, Shakespeare places two entirely different types of woman together, and renders their characters clearer by the contrast. This we have already seen in *Antony and Cleopatra*, where our dark, unbridled, vain and ardent Egyptian comes forth more statuesquely by the white, cold, moral, arch-prosaic and domestic Octavia.

<sup>1</sup> *Titus Andronicus*, act ii. sc. 3.



And yet that Tamora is a fine figure, and I think it is an injustice that the English graver has not traced her portrait in this Gallery of Shakespearean ladies. She is a magnificently majestic woman, an enchanting and imperial figure, on whose brow are the marks of a fallen deity, in her eyes a world-devouring lust, splendidly vicious, panting with thirst for red blood. Pitying and far-seeing as our poet ever is, he has beforehand justified, in the first scene where Tamora appears, all the horrors which she at a later time inflicted on Andronicus.<sup>1</sup> For this grim Roman, unmoved by her most agonised mother's prayers, suffers her son to be put to death before her eyes; and as soon as she sees in the wooing favour of the young Emperor the rays of hope of future vengeance, there roll forth from her lips the exultant and darkly foreboding words:—

“I'll find a day to massacre them all,  
 And raze their faction and their family,  
 The cruel father and his traitorous sons,  
 To whom I sued for my dear son's life;  
 And make them know what 'tis to let a queen  
 Kneel in the streets, and beg for grace in vain.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This sympathy with Tamora and her vindication are not creditable to Heine. It is difficult to understand how the sacrifice of Alarbus, in accordance with the custom of the times, justifies the outraging and mutilation of Lavinia. The traces of divinity in Tamora are indeed very faint.—*Translator*

<sup>2</sup> *Titus Andronicus*, act i. sc. 2.

As her cruelty is excused by the excess of sufferings which she endured, so the harlot-like looseness with which she abandons herself to a disgusting negro is to a degree ennobled by the romantic poetry which is manifested in it. Yes, that scene in which the Empress, having left her *cortège* during a hunt, finds herself alone in the wood with her beloved black, belongs to the most terribly sweet magic pictures of romantic poetry—

“ My lovely Aaron, wherefore look'st thou sad,  
 When everything doth make a gleeful boast ?  
 The birds chaunt melody on every bush ;  
 The snake lies rollèd in the cheerful sun ;  
 The green leaves quiver with the cooling wind,  
 And make a chequer'd shadow on the ground :  
 Under their sweet shade, Aaron, let us sit,  
 And, whilst the babbling echo mocks the hounds,  
 Replying shrilly to the well-tuned horns,  
 As if a double hunt were heard at once,  
 Let us sit down and mark their yelling noise ;  
 And,—after conflict, such as was suppos'd  
 The wandering prince and Dido once enjoy'd,  
 When with a happy storm they were surpris'd,  
 And curtain'd with a counsel-keeping cave,—  
 We may, each wreathèd in the other's arms,  
 Our pastimes done, possess a golden slumber ;  
 Whiles hounds, and horns, and sweet melodious birds,  
 Be unto us, as is a nurse's song  
 Of lullaby, to bring her babe to sleep.” \*

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\* *Titus Andronicus*, act ii. sc. 3.

But while the gleams of passion flash from the eyes of the beautiful Empress and play on the black form of the negro, like decoy lights or curling flames, *he* thinks of far more serious things—on the execution of the most infamous intrigues, and his answer forms the rudest contrast to the impassioned appeal of Tamora.

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### CONSTANCE.

[KING JOHN.]

It was in the year 1827 after the birth of Christ that I gradually went to sleep in the theatre in Berlin during the first representation of a new tragedy by Herr E. Raupach.

For the highly cultured public which does not go to the theatre, and only reads that which is strictly literature, I must here remark that the Herr Raupach referred to is a very useful man, who supplies tragedies and comedies, and provides the stage of Berlin every month with a new masterpiece. The Berlin stage is admirable, and one especially useful for Hegelian philosophers who wish to refresh themselves by repose in the evening after hard work during the heat of the day. The soul reinvigorates

itself there far more in accordance with nature, than by Wisotzki. One goes into the theatre, stretches himself carelessly on the velvet seat, looks through his opera-glass at the faces of his fair neighbours or the legs of the lady-dancers, and if the fellows on the stage don't shout too loudly, he goes to sleep comfortably and peaceably—even as I did on the 29th of August 1827. P. M. C.

When I awoke all was dark and drear around me, and by the light of a dim flickering lamp I saw that I was alone in the theatre. I determined to pass the rest of the night there, and tried to softly sink again to slumber, which did not succeed so easily as it had done some hours before, when the poppy perfume of the Raupach rhymes had risen to my brain; and I was, moreover, much disturbed by the squeaking and cheeping of mice. Near the orchestra rustled and bustled a whole colony of the *gens* Mus; and as I understand not only Raupachian verses, but also the languages of all other kinds of animals, I involuntarily overheard all the mice said. They conversed on subjects such as would naturally interest a thinking being—the ultimate basis of all phenomena, the nature of things in and for themselves, fate, freewill, foreknowledge absolute, and the great Raupachian tragedy, which had with all conceivable horrors not long before unfolded,

developed itself, and ended before their very eyes.

“You young people,” slowly said an old mouse of stately and commanding presence, “you have only seen a single play—at best but a few—but I am grey, and have lived through many and marked them all with care. And I have found that in reality they are all alike, that they are generally variations on the same theme; and that very often the same situations, entanglements, and catastrophes are set before us. They are always the same men with the same passions, who only change costumes and figures of speech. There are always the same motives of action, love or hate, or ambition, or envy or jealousy, whether the hero wears a Roman toga or old German mail, a turban or a felt hat, and whether he speaks simply or in flowery verse, in bad iambics, or even worse trochees. The whole history of mankind, which people are so prone to divide into different dramas, acts and entrances, is after all one and the same story, only a masked come-round-again procession of the same natures and occurrences, an organic rotation in orbit, which begins anew from the same initial; and when one has once realised this, he no longer bewails the bad nor rejoices too readily over the good—he smiles at the folly of the heroes who sacrifice themselves for the perfection and prosperity of



the human race, and amuses himself, with calm composure."

A tittering, giggling little voice, which seemed to be that of a small shrewd mouse, here quickly interposed.

"I too have seen a thing or two, and that not merely from a single place or view. I never spared myself in jumping high nor balked a leap for knowledge; I left the pit and looked at things behind the stage itself, where I made startling discoveries. The hero whom I had just admired is no hero, for I saw how a young fellow called him a drunken rascal, and gave him kicks which he quietly received. The virtuous princess who appeared as sacrificing her life to save her virtue, is no more a princess than she is virtuous; I have seen how she took red powder from a china cup to colour her cheeks—and this passed in the play for the blush of modesty; and, after all, she threw herself yawning into the arms of a lieutenant of the guards, who told her on his word of honour she'd find in his room a stunnin' herrin' salad and a glass of punch.<sup>1</sup> What you thought was thunder and lightning is only the rolling of tin cylinders and the burning of a few crumbs of pulverised rosin. Even that portly, honourable citizen who seemed to be all unselfishness and

<sup>1</sup> *Einen guten Heringsalat nebst einem Glase Punsch.* J (i.e., Y) for G is characteristic of the Prussian dialect.



generosity, quarrelled most miserly about money with a meagre man whom he called the chief manager, and from whom he wanted a few thalers of extra pay. Yes, I have seen all with my own eyes, and heard with my own ears, all the greatness and nobility which is acted before us is all sham and flam. Self-interest and selfishness are the secret springs of all actions, and an intelligent being will not let itself be humbugged by outside show."

Here, however, there rose a sighing, sorrowful voice which seemed familiar to my ears, though I know not whether it was of a mouse male or a mouse feminine. She began with a wail over the frivolity of the age, lamented its unbelief and scepticism, and said a great deal about her love for everything and everybody. "I love you," she sighed, "and I tell you the truth. And Truth revealed itself to me through grace in a blessed hour. I was on a pilgrimage, going about here and there trying to attain to a revelation or comprehension of the various deeds which are done on this earthly stage, and also to pick up some crumbs to satisfy my bodily hunger—for I love you. And it came to pass that I found a spacious hole—yes, my friends—a chest, in which there sat crouching a thin grey dwarf,<sup>1</sup> who held in his hand a roll of paper, and with a slow monotonous voice he repeated to himself

<sup>1</sup> This refers to the prompter in his box.—*Translator.*

all the speeches which are declaimed before us so loudly and passionately on the stage. A mystic shudder flurried all my fur. I knew that, despite my unworthiness, I had attained grace to see into the Holy of Holies. I found myself in the blessed presence of the mysterious First-being—the pure Spirit who rules the corporeal world with his will, who creates it with a word, inspires it with a word, and with a word destroys—for I saw that the heroes on the stage whom I had a little while before so greatly admired, only spoke confidently when they, in absolute confiding faith, my dear friends, repeated the text exactly as he gave it—yea, and that they stumbled and stuttered when they in their pride turned from his ways and listened not unto the sound of his voice. All beings I beheld depended on him. He was the only self-existent one in his all-holiest ark. On every side thereof glowed the mystic lamps, rang the violins, and softly pealed the flutes; around him was light and music—he swam in harmonious rays and flashing harmonies.” . . .

Then the speech became so nasal and weepingly whispering that I understood but little more, only now and then I caught the words, “Deliver us from cats and mouse-traps—give us each day our daily bread crumbs—I love ye—in eternity. Amen!”

By giving this dream I endeavour to set forth

my views as to the different philosophical points of view whence men regard history, at the same time showing why I do not load these light leaves with any peculiar philosophy of English history.

For I will not, above all things, analyse or dogmatically elucidate that in which Shakespeare has ennobled the great events of English chronicle, but only decorate with a few arabesques of words the portraits of the women who bloom in those poems. And as in these English historical dramas the women play anything but chief parts, and as the poet never lets them appear as female characters and figures, as we generally see them in other plays, but simply because the plot requires their presence, so will I speak the more sparingly of them.

Constance begins the dance, or is first in the procession, and that sorrowfully enough. She bears her child, like a *Mater dolorosa*, on her arm—the oppressed boy

“Who is not plagued for her sin,<sup>1</sup>  
But God hath made her sin and her the plague  
Of this removed issue.”

I once saw the part of this mourning queen admirably acted on the Berlin stage by Madame Stich. Much less brilliant was the queen, Maria

<sup>1</sup> That of Queen Elinor. *King John*, act i. sc. 2.

Louisa, who, during the French invasion, played Queen Constance in the royal French theatre. But miserable beyond all measure in this part was a certain Madame Caroline, who acted about in the provinces. She wanted neither beauty, talent, nor passion—unfortunately she had too big a belly, which always injures an actress when she must act grandly tragic parts.<sup>1</sup>

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LADY PERCY.

[KING HENRY IV.]

I HAD imagined her face, and especially her form, less plump, or *embonpoint*, than is here represented. But it may be that the sharp traits and slender form which are apparent in her words, and which her spiritual physiognomy presents, contrast the more interestingly with her well-rounded outer form. She is cheerful, cordial, and sound in body and soul. Prince Henry, who would fain make a jest of this agreeable personage, thus parodies her and her Percy:—

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<sup>1</sup> Notwithstanding the cleverness of the fable of the mice, these comments on Constance must be pronounced an utter failure as regards appreciation of the character, while the conclusion, containing an allusion to a political personage, which is not worth explaining, is like the last whoop with an unseemly gesture of a clown leaving the ring.—*Translator*.

"I am not yet of Percy's mind, the Hotspur of the North ; he that kills me some six or seven dozens of Scots at a breakfast, washes his hands, and says to his wife—*Fy upon this quiet life ! I want work. O my sweet Harry, says she, how many hast thou killed to-day ? Give my roan horse a drench, says he ; and answers, Some fourteen, an hour after ; a trifle, a trifle.*"<sup>1</sup>

This scene, in which we see the real domestic life of Percy and his wife, is as delightful as it is succinct—a scene in which she checks the boisterous hero with the boldest words :—

*Lady Percy.* Come, come, you paraquito, answer me Directly unto this question that I ask :  
In faith, I'll break thy little finger, Harry,  
An if thou wilt not tell me all things true.

*Hotspur.* Away,  
Away, you trifler !—Love ?—I love thee not,  
I care not for thee, Kate : this is no world  
To play with mammets, and to tilt with lips :  
We must have bloody noses and crack'd crowns,  
And pass them current too.—Gods me, my horse !—  
What say'st thou, Kate ? what wouldst thou have with me ?

*Lady Percy.* Do you not love me ? do you not, indeed ?  
Well, do not, then ; for since you love me not,  
I will not love myself. Do you not love me ?  
Nay, tell me if you speak in jest or no.

*Hotspur.* Come, wilt thou see me ride ?  
And when I am o' horseback, I will swear  
I love thee infinitely. But hark you, Kate ;  
I must not have you henceforth question me  
Whither I go, nor reason whereabout :

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<sup>1</sup> *First Part of King Henry IV., act ii. sc. 4.*

Whither I must, I must ; and, to conclude,  
This evening must I leave you, gentle Kate.  
I know you wise ; but yet no farther wise  
Than Harry Percy's wife : constant you are ;  
But yet a woman : and for secrecy,  
No lady closer ; for I well believe  
Thou wilt not utter what thou dost not know,—  
And so far will I trust thee, gentle Kate."<sup>1</sup>

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## PRINCESS KATHARINE.

[KING HENRY V.]

DID Shakespeare really write the scene in which the Princess Katharine takes a lesson in the English language, and are all the French phrases in it with which John Bull is so much pleased, his own ? I doubt it. Our poet might have produced the same comic effect by means of an English jargon, and all the more easily because the English language has this peculiarity, that, without being ungrammatical, it can by the mere use of Latin<sup>2</sup> words and constructions bring out a certain French expression of thought. In

<sup>1</sup> *First Part of King Henry IV.*, act ii. sc. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Romanische Wörter*, not literally Latin words, but those of Latin derivation.—*Translator*.



the same manner an English dramatist could indicate or suggest a German style of thought, if he would use old Saxon expressions and inflections. For the English language consists of two heterogeneous elements, the Latin and the German, which, being merely squeezed together, do not form an organic whole, and which easily fall apart—when we cannot decide as to which side the real English belongs. One has only to compare the language of Doctor Johnson or of Addison with that of Byron or Cobbett. It was really quite unnecessary for Shakespeare to let the Princess Katharine talk French.

This leads me back to a remark which I have already made. It is a defect in the historical drama of Shakespeare that he does not contrast the Norman French spirit of the higher nobility with the Saxon British spirit of the people by means of characteristic forms of speech. Walter Scott did this in his novels, and thereby attained his most startling effects.

The artist who has contributed to this gallery the portrait of the French princess has, perhaps inspired by English malice, given her features more expressive of drollery than beauty. She has here a true bird face, and her eyes look as if they belonged to some one else. Are those parrot's feathers which she wears on her head, and are they intended to indicate her babbling

echoes and docility? She has little white inquisitive hands, her whole soul is the vain love of adornment and coquetry, and she can flirt most charmingly with her fan. I would wager that her feet coquet with the ground on which she walks.

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JOAN OF ARC.

[FIRST PART OF KING HENRY VI.]

HAIL to thee, great German, Schiller, who didst purify gloriously the great monumental statue from the smutty wit of Voltaire, and the black spots with which it was libelled even by Shakespeare's song.<sup>1</sup> Yes, whether it was British national hatred or mediæval superstition which darkened his mind, our poet has represented the heroic maid as a witch allied to the dark powers of hell. He makes her evoke the demons of the underworld, and her dire and cruel execution is justified by this assumption. A deep discontent is

<sup>1</sup> *Den schwarzen Flecken, die ihm sogar Shakespeare ange-dichtet.* *Dichten*, to compose as an author. *Andichten*, to invent a charge against one, to libel, to impute falsely against.—*Translator.*

always in my mind when I walk over the little market-place of Rouen, where the Maid was burned, and where a bad statue immortalises the bad deed. To put to death by torture! That was your fashion then towards fallen foes! Next after the rock of St. Helena, the market-place of Rouen gives the most revolting proof of the magnanimity of Englishmen.

Yes, even Shakespeare sinned against the Maid, and if he does not manifest decided enmity, he treats the noble virgin who freed her fatherland in a manner which is both unfriendly and unamiable. And, had she done it with the help of hell, she would have deserved for it honour and admiration.

Or are the critics in the right when they deny that the play in which the Maid is introduced, as well as the second and third parts of *Henry VI.*, were not written by the great poet? They declare that this trilogy belongs to the older dramas, which he only worked over. I would gladly, if it were only for the sake of the Maid of Orleans, assent to this. But the arguments adduced are not tenable. These disputed dramas manifest in many places far too decidedly the perfect stamp of the genius of Shakespeare.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Heine in this paper assumes as a settled thing that all the details and truths as regards Joan of Arc are perfectly known, and that they are fully set forth by Schiller. In fact it is a

## MARGARET.

[FIRST PART OF KING HENRY VI.]

HERE we see the beautiful daughter of Count Reignier as yet a maid. Suffolk enters, leading her as captive, but ere he himself is aware she

very doubtful matter whether the Maid was ever burned at all, and whether she did not marry and become the mother of a large family. As regards witchcraft, had Heine lived in Shakespeare's time he would certainly have believed in it heart and soul. But there is no proof that Shakespeare was superstitious in any respect. Joan of Arc gave it out, and perhaps herself believed, that she was visited by spirits, and in a credulous age she naturally brought upon herself the charge of being a sorceress. Shakespeare simply used the generally accredited tradition as a dramatist. Heine appears here to have totally forgotten that in Germany, long after the time of Joan of Arc, many thousands of witches, who did not pretend to supernatural gifts, and who had not made themselves violently obnoxious to great political powers, were put to death far more cruelly. If the very doubtful death of Joan of Arc in a very Catholic age is a proof of British barbarism, what do the witch burnings of the Protestants in the seventeenth century indicate as regards German humanity?

It may be remarked that in the concluding paragraph Heine remarks that Shakespeare could not have worked over or retouched (*bearbeitet*) this play on Henry VI. because they bear "in many parts" the *Vollgepräge* or perfect stamp of his genius. It might be asked to what purpose he reworked or finished up the dramas, if it was not to give them such a stamp or effect? The whole article indicates that it was intended to flatter the Germans through Schiller, and especially to gratify the French by abuse of England.

has enchained him. He quite reminds us of the recruit who cried from the guard-post to his captain that he had made a captive. "Bring him here then to me!" answered his chief. "I can't," was the reply, "for he won't let me."<sup>1</sup>

Suffolk speaks:—

"Be not offended, nature's miracle,  
Thou art allotted to be ta'en by me:  
So doth the swan her downy cygnets save,  
Keeping them prisoners underneath her wings.  
Yet, if this servile usage once offend,  
Go and be free again as Suffolk's friend.

*[She turns away as going.]*

O stay!—I have no power to let her pass;  
My hand would free her, but my heart says no.  
As plays the sun upon the glassy streams,  
Twinkling another counterfeited beam,  
So seems this gorgeous beauty to mine eyes.  
Fain would I woo her, yet I dare not speak:  
I'll call for pen and ink, and write my mind:  
Fie, de la Poole! disable not thyself;  
Ha-t not a tongue? is she not here thy prisoner?  
Wilt thou be daunted at a woman's sight?  
Ay; beauty's princely majesty is such,  
Confounds the tongue, and makes the senses rough.  
*Mar.* Say, Earl of Suffolk,—if thy name be so,—  
What ransom must I pay before I pass?  
For, I perceive, I am thy prisoner.

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<sup>1</sup> As usually told, the soldier cried that he had caught a Tartar. "Bring him in then." "He winna let me go!" This is the usually accredited sense of the saying, "He has caught a Tartar."—*Translator.*

*Suf.* How canst thou tell, she will deny thy suit,  
Before thou make a trial of her love? [*Aside.*

*Mar.* Why speak'st thou not? what ransom must I pay?

*Suf.* She's beautiful; and therefore to be woo'd:  
She is a woman; therefore to be won."<sup>1</sup>

He at last finds it best to keep the prisoner, and, wedding her to his king, become at once her public subject and her private lover.

Has this connection of Margaret with Suffolk any historical basis? I do not know. But Shakespeare's eye of divination often sees things of which chronicles say nothing, yet are none the less true. He knows even those fleeting dreams of bygone days which Clio forgot to write. There lie perhaps upon the stage of events all kinds of varied images or forms, which do not flit as common shadows with the real shapes, but come like ghostly things upon the ground, unnoted by the busy world of men who, naught surmising, carry on their work. Yet they are often visible enough, as clear in colour as distinct in form unto the eyes of seers born on Sunday whom we call poets!

<sup>1</sup> *First Part of King Henry VI., act v. sc. 3.*

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## QUEEN MARGARET.

[SECOND AND THIRD PARTS OF KING HENRY VI.]

IN this likeness we see the same Margaret as queen, and as wife of the sixth Henry. The bud has blossomed; she is now a full-blown rose, but a repulsive worm lies hid therein. She has become a hard-hearted, evil-minded woman. Horrible beyond all comparison, be it in the world of reality or poetry, is the scene where she gives to the weeping York the ghastly handkerchief dipped in the blood of his son, and jeering bids him dry his tears on it. The words are dreadful:—

“Look, York; I stain’d this napkin with the blood  
That valiant Clifford with his rapier’s point  
Made issue from the bosom of the boy:  
And, if thine eyes can water for his death,  
I give thee this to dry thy cheeks withal.  
Alas, poor York! but that I hate thee deadly,  
I should lament thy miserable state.  
I prythee, grieve to make me merry, York;  
Stamp, rave, and fret, that I may sing and dance.”<sup>1</sup>

Had the artist who designed the beautiful Margaret for this gallery represented her with more

<sup>1</sup> *Third Part of King Henry VI.*, act i. sc. 3.

widely opened lips, we might have seen that she has teeth like a beast of prey.<sup>1</sup>

In the next drama, or in *Richard III.*, she appears as personally repulsive, for the sharp teeth have been broken, she can no longer bite, but only ban, and so as a ghostly old woman wanders through the royal chambers, and the toothless old mouth murmurs words of evil omen and execrations.

Yet through her love for Suffolk—"the wild Suffolk"—Shakespeare awakes in us some spark of sympathy even for this un-woman. Sinful or shameful as this love may be, we cannot deny it truth nor earnestness. How rapturously beautiful are the two lovers' parting words, and what tenderness in those of Margaret!—

"*Q. Mar.* O, let me entreat thee, cease! Give me thy hand,

That I may dew it with my mournful tears;  
Nor let the rain of heaven wet this place,  
To wash away my woful monuments.  
O, could this kiss be printed in thy hand;

[*Kisses his hand.*]

That thou might'st think upon these by the seal,  
Through whom a thousand sighs are breathed for thee!  
So, get thee gone, that I may know my grief;  
'Tis but surmised whilst thou art standing by,  
As one that surfeits thinking on a want.

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<sup>1</sup> "She-wolf of France, but worse than wolves of France."

—*Third Part of King Henry VI.*, act i. sc. 4.

I will repeal thee, or, be well assured,  
 Adventure to be banished myself :  
 And banished I am, if but from thee.  
 Go, speak not to me ; even now be gone.—  
 O, go not yet !—Even thus two friends, condemn'd,  
 Embrace, and kiss, and take ten thousand leaves,  
 Loather a hundred times to part than die.  
 Yet now farewell ; and farewell life with thee !

*Suf.* Thus is poor Suffolk ten times banished,  
 Once by the king, and three times thrice by thee.  
 'Tis not the land I care for, wert thou hence :

A wilderness is populous enough,  
 So Suffolk had thy heavenly company :  
 For where thou art, there is the world itself,  
 With every several pleasure in the world :  
 And where thou art not, desolation.

I can no more :—Live thou to joy thy life ;  
 Myself no joy in nought, but that thou liv'st."<sup>1</sup>

And later, when Margaret, bearing the bloody head of her beloved in her hand, wails forth the wildest despair, she reminds us of the terrible Chrimhilda of the "Nibelungenlied." What iron-mailed agonies whence all words of comfort glance aside in vain !

I have already shown in the introduction that I intended as regarded the English historical dramas of Shakespeare to refrain from historical and philosophical reflections. The theme of those dramas will never be fully discussed, so long as the strife of the modern requirements of indus-

<sup>1</sup> *Second Part of King Henry VI.*, act iii. sc. 2.

trial development with that of mediæval feudalism in all its various surviving forms continues. It is not so easy here as in the Roman dramas to express a decided opinion, and every bold free utterance might meet with a dubious or displeased reception. But I cannot here refrain from one remark.

It is unintelligible to me how certain German commentators take side with the English party, and that very decidedly, when they speak of those French wars which are depicted in the dramas of Shakespeare. For, in truth, in those wars the English had with them neither justice nor poetry. For they partly concealed the coarsest spirit of robbery under worthless claims of succession, and in part made war as mean mercenaries in the vulgar interests of mere merchants or shopmen—just as they do to-day in these our times, only that in the nineteenth century they deal more in coffee and sugar, whereas in the fourteenth and fifteenth it was in sheep's wool.<sup>1</sup>

Michelet, in that genial work, his "History of France," remarks very truly:—

"The secret of the battles of Cressy, Poitiers, &c., is to be sought in the counting-houses of the merchants of London, of Bordeaux and Bruges. . . . Wool and meat founded the original Eng-

<sup>1</sup> Or, as men say in the American stock-market, "lambs," meaning victims. The allusion may be taken to drawing the wool over one's eyes, to blind a victim to its fate, as well as to literal trade in wool.—*Translator*.

land, and the English race. Before England became a great woollen-mill and iron factory for the whole world, it was a meat factory. From the earliest times this race busied itself with cattle-raising and nourished itself with meat. Hence the freshness of complexion of this (snub-nosed and back-of-the-head-less) beauty. May I here be permitted to mention a personal experience.

“I had seen London and a great part of England and Scotland; I had stared with amazement at more than I had understood. And it was on my return journey, as I went from York to Manchester, cutting across the breadth of the island, that I first began to form a true idea of England. It was a damp, foggy morning, when the country seemed not to be merely surrounded but inundated by the ocean. A pale sun hardly lit up half the landscape. The new tile-red houses would have contrasted harshly with the sap-green banks if these screaming colours had not been subdued by the fleeting sea-mists. Fat farm meadows, covered with sheep, over-topped by the flaming chimneys of factories. Cattle-raising, agriculture, industry, all were crowded together in this little space, one over the other, one feeding the other—the grass fed by the fog, the sheep by the grass, and man by blood.

“Man in this devouring climate, where he is always tormented by hunger, can only sustain life



by hard work. Nature compels him to it. But he knows how to revenge himself on her; he compels her to work, and subdues her with iron and fire. All England pants with this strife. Man there seems to be enraged, and as if beside himself. See yon red face, that wildly gleaming eye! One might suppose that he was drunk. But his head and hand are firm and sure. He is only intoxicated with blood and strength. He manages himself like a steam-machine, which he crams to excess with fuel, to get from it as much work and speed as is possible.

“During the middle ages the Englishman was much the same as he now is, far too well fed, driven to trade, and warlike when industrial pursuits were wanting.

“England, though vigorously pursuing agriculture and cattle-raising, did not then manufacture. The English produced the raw material, other people turned it to profit. Wool was on one side of the Channel and workmen on the other. But while princes quarrelled and fought, the English cattle-dealer and the Flemish cloth-factors lived in the best accord, and in an undisturbed alliance. The French, who wished to break this bond of union, atoned for the beginning of it with a hundred years of war.<sup>1</sup> The English

<sup>1</sup> Heine has previously declared that the English begun these wars, *vide* p. 331.—*Translator.*



kings wished to conquer France, but the people wanted only freedom of trade, free ports, free markets for English wool. Gathered round a great wool-sack, the commons consulted over the king's demands, and willingly granted him subsidies and armies.

“Such a mixture of industry and chivalry imparts a strange and wonderful aspect to all the history of the time. That Edward who swore on the Round Table a proud oath to conquer France, those solemn and silly knights who in pursuance of their vows covered one eye with red cloth, were not, however, such fools as to go to war at their own expense. The pious innocence of the Crusaders was no longer in keeping with the age. These knights were in reality mercenaries, paid mercantile agents, and armed and armoured commercial travellers for the merchants of London and Ghent. Edward himself was obliged to give pledges, to lay aside all pride, to flatter the clothier and weaver guilds, to hold out his hand to his gossip the beer brewer Artevelde, and mount the desk of a cattle-dealer to address the multitude.

“The English tragedies of the fourteenth century have very comical sides. There is always something of Falstaff in their noblest knights. In France, in Italy, in Spain, in the fair lands of the South, they always show themselves as rapacious and gluttonous as they are brave. It is

Hercules, the devourer of oxen. They came to devour the land, in the literal sense of the word. But the land retaliates and conquers them with fruit and wine. Their princes and armies surfeit themselves with food and drink, and die of indigestion and dysentery."

Compare with these hired and gluttonous heroes the French, that most temperate race, which was less intoxicated with its wine than by innate enthusiasm. This, indeed, was the cause of their misfortune, and so we can see how it happened that even in the middle of the fourteenth century they, by the very excess of chivalry, succumbed to the English foe. It was at Cressy where the French appear more glorious in their defeat than do the English by their victory, which they in unknighthly fashion gained by employing infantry. Hitherto war had been only a great tournament of knights of equal birth; at Cressy this romantic cavalry, this poetry, was disgracefully shot down by modern infantry, by prose in strongest disciplined order of battle—yes, even cannon here appear. The grey-bearded King of Bohemia, who, blind and old, was in this battle as a vassal of France, marked well that a new era had begun, that all was at an end with chivalry, that in future the man on horseback would be beaten by the man on foot, and so said to his knights: 'I beg you most earnestly, carry me so far into the fight, that I may once more

strike one good blow with my sword!' They obeyed him, bound their horses to his, rushed with him headlong into the wildest of the fray, and the next morning all were found dead on their dead horses, all still bound together. And as this King of Bohemia perished with his knights, so the French fell at Cressy; they died—but on horseback. England won the victory, France the fame. Yes, even in their defeat, the French cast their conquerors into the shade. The triumphs of the English are ever a shame to humanity, from the days of Cressy and Poitiers to that of Waterloo. Clio is always a woman in spite of her impartial coolness, she is sensitive to knighthood and heroism, and I am convinced that it is with gnashing teeth that she inscribes in her tablets the victories of England.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Of this chapter it may be said emphatically, "fine writing but foolish." For there can be no greater folly than to rake into the remote past for reasons to ridicule the present conditions of society, which are now entirely changed. And when we consider that all this exaltation of pure aristocracy and chivalry over base mechanicals and mere money-making merchants comes from Heine, who elsewhere modestly requests the world to lay a sword on his grave because he had been such a brave soldier in the war against aristocracy and ancient wrongs in the cause of the people, this abuse of the English for not being knightly is simply comic. But when we find him wailing over the first great manifestation of the power of the people in the employment of infantry at Cressy, and speaking with blue-blooded, bitter scorn of vulgar foot-soldiers and cannon, the inconsistency rises to broad absurdity. Our author asserts that in this battle the victory was with the English and its glory to the French;

## LADY GREY.

[THIRD PART OF KING HENRY VI.]

SHE was a poor widow who came trembling before King Edward, and begged him to restore to her children the small estate which, after the death of her husband, had reverted to the enemy. The licentious king, who could not stir her chastity, was so enchanted by her beauty, that he placed the crown on her head. Her history, known to all the world, announces how much misery to both came from this match.

Did Shakespeare really describe the character of this king with strict regard to history? Here I must repeat the remark that he perfectly understood how to fill historical gaps. His royal characters are all drawn with such truth, that, as an English writer remarked, we might often suppose that he had been all his life the Chancellor of the monarch whom he makes act in many dramas. My own memories of the striking similarity be-  
but in truth it was a double victory and glory to the former; one over the enemy, and another and far more glorious over the old order of things, in which all renown was for the few and none for the many. It was absolutely this battle which has since made England victorious in a thousand fields, and it was the rise of the "wool-growers and merchants," or of the middle class, which sustained and supported the national military spirit.  
—*Translator.*

tween his ancient kings, and certain kings of the present day, whom as contemporaries we can best judge, are tests of his truth to life.

What Friederich Schlegel says of the writer of history holds good of our poet. He is a prophet looking into the past. Were it permissible to hold the mirror up to one of the greatest of our crowned contemporaries, every one would perceive that Shakespeare made out his public notification<sup>1</sup> two hundred years ago. In fact, when we contemplate this great, admirable, and certainly also glorious monarch, a certain strange thrill comes over us, such as we might experience should we in broad daylight meet a form which we had before seen only in nightly dreams. When we saw him eight years ago, riding through the streets bare-headed, humbly greeting all on every side, we thought continually of the passage in which York describes Bolingbroke's entry to London. His cousin, the later Richard II., knew him well, studied him closely, and expressed himself once very accurately:—

“Ourself, and Bushy, Bagot here, and Green,  
Observed his courtship to the common people:—  
How he did seem to dive into their hearts,  
With humble and familiar courtesy;  
What reverence he did throw away on slaves;

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<sup>1</sup> *Steckbrief*, writ of arrest, the public notice of a runaway, including a description of him.



Wooing poor craftsmen, with the craft of smiles,  
 And patient underbearing of his fortune,  
 As 'twere, to banish their effects with him.  
 Off goes his bonnet to an oyster-wench ;  
 A brace of draymen bid—God speed him well,  
 And had the tribute of his supple knee,  
 With—*Thanks, my countrymen, my loving friends ;—*  
 As were our England in reversion his,  
 And he our subjects' next degree in hope."<sup>1</sup>

Yes, the likeness is startling. The present Bolingbroke develops himself before our eyes accurately like the one of yore who, after the fall of his royal cousin, mounted the throne, and little by little made firm his seat—a clever, crafty hero, a creeping giant, a Titan of dissimulation, terribly, yes, tremendously calm, the claws in a velvet glove, and while caressing with it and cajoling public opinion, watching his prey far in the distance, and never leaping on it till it is near. May he ever conquer his blustering enemies, and keep peace in his kingdom until the hour of his death, when he may address his son in the words which Shakespeare long ago wrote for him :—

“Come hither, Harry, sit thou by my bed ;  
 And hear, I think, the very latest counsel,  
 That ever I shall breathe. Heaven knows, my son,  
 By what by-paths, and indirect crook'd ways,  
 I met this crown : and I myself know well,  
 How troublesome it sat upon my head :

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<sup>1</sup> *King Richard II.*, act i. sc. 4.



To thee it shall descend with better quiet,  
 Better opinion, better confirmation ;  
 For all the soil of the achievement goes  
 With me into the earth. It seem'd in me,  
 But as an honour snatch'd with boisterous hand ;  
 And I had many living, to upbraid  
 My gain of it by their assistances ;  
 Which daily grew to quarrel, and to bloodshed,  
 Wounding supposed peace : all these bold fears,  
 Thou seest, with peril I have answered :  
 For all my reign hath been but as a scene  
 Acting that argument ; and now my death  
 Changes the mode ; for what in me was purchased,  
 Falls upon thee in a more fairer sort ;  
 So thou the garland wear'st successively.  
 Yet, though thou stand'st more sure than I could do,  
 Thou art not firm enough, since griefs are green ;  
 And all my friends, which thou must make thy friends,  
 Have but their stings and teeth newly ta'en out ;  
 By whose fell working I was first advanced,  
 And by whose power I well might lodge a fear  
 To be again displaced : which to avoid,  
 I cut them off ; and had a purpose now  
 To lead out many to the Holy Land ;  
 Lest rest, and lying still, might make them look  
 Too near unto my state. Therefore, my Harry,  
 Be it thy course, to busy giddy minds  
 With foreign quarrels ; that action, hence borne out,  
 May waste the memory of the former days.  
 More would I, but my lungs are wasted so,  
 That strength of speech is utterly denied me.  
 How I came by the crown, O God, forgive !  
 And grant it may with thee in true peace live !"<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *First Part of King Henry IV.*, act iv. sc. 4.

## LADY ANNE.

[KING RICHARD III.]

THE favour of fair women, like fortune, is a free gift—we receive it without knowing how or why. But there are men who know how to force it with iron will from fate, and these attain their aim either by flattery or inspiring terror in women, by awaking their sympathy, or by artfully giving them opportunities to sacrifice themselves. This last—that is, self-sacrifice—is the favourite part of women in the play of love, for it sets them off so well before the world, and assures them so many raptures of tears and woe when alone.

Lady Anne is impelled by all these forces at once. Words of flattery flow like virgin honey from his terrible lips. Richard flatters her—that same Richard who inspires her with all the horrors of hell—he who has murdered her loved husband, and the paternal friend whose corpse she is accompanying to the grave. He commands the pall-bearers with imperious voice to set down the coffin, and at this moment begins to woo the beautiful sufferer. The lamb sees with dread the gnashing teeth of the wolf—but the terror at once tunes his voice to the sweetest sounds of flattery, and this flattery from a wolf works so prevailingly, so like

intoxication on the poor lamb's soul, that every feeling in it is reversed.

And King Richard speaks of his sufferings, of his grief, so that Anne cannot withhold her pity, all the more because this wild being is far from being of a plaintive nature. . . . And this wretched murderer has qualms of conscience—speaks of repentance—a good woman might perhaps lead him to the better path if she would sacrifice herself for him! And so Anne determines to be Queen of England.

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### QUEEN KATHARINE.

[KING HENRY VIII.]

I CHERISH an insuperable prejudice against this queen, to whom I must, however, ascribe every virtue. As a wife she was a pattern of domestic fidelity. As queen she bore her part with the highest dignity and majesty. As a Christian she was piety itself. But Doctor Samuel Johnson was inspired by her to the most extravagantly soaring laudation. She is, among all Shakespeare's women, his choicest darling; he speaks of her with tenderness and emotion . . . and that

is intolerable. Shakespeare has employed all the might of his genius to glorify her, but all this is in vain when we see that Doctor Johnson, that great pot of porter, falls into sweet rapture at her sight and foams with eulogy. If she had been my wife such praise would have induced me to get a divorce. Perhaps it was not the charms of Anna Bullen which tore the poor king from her, but the enthusiasm with which some Doctor Johnson of the time spoke of the faithful, dignified, and pious Katharine. Did Thomas More, perhaps, who, with all his surpassing excellence was rather pedantic, hide-bound, and indigestible—even as Doctor Johnson was—exalt the queen too much towards heaven? The brave Chancellor, however, paid rather too dearly for his enthusiasm; the king exalted him for it to heaven itself.

I do not really know at which I am most amazed—that Katharine endured her husband for fifteen years, or that he so long put up with her? The king was not only very full of whims, irritable, and in constant contradiction with all his wife's inclinations—that is common enough in marriages, which, however, endure in admirable fashion till death makes an end of all—but the king was also a musician and theologian, and both to perfect wretchedness! I heard not long ago, as a delightful curiosity, a choral com-

posed by him, which was quite as bad as his treatise, *De Septem Sacramentis*. He certainly did bore his poor wife terribly with his musical compositions and theological authorship. The best in Henry was his feeling for plastic art, and it may be that his worst sympathies and antipathies were due to his predilection for the beautiful. Katharine of Arragon was still attractive in her twenty-fourth year when Henry at eighteen married her, though she was the widow of his brother. But her beauty in all probability did not increase with years, all the more since she, from pious motives, chastised the flesh with flagellation, fasting, vigils, and afflictions sore. Her husband bewailed bitterly these ascetic practices, and truly they would have been a source of desperation to any of us.

And there is something else which strengthens my prejudice against this queen. She was the daughter of Isabella of Castile, and the mother of Bloody Mary. What could come from a tree which grew from such sinful seed, and which bore such evil fruit?

And though we find in history no evidences of her cruelty, still the wild pride of her race breaks out on every opportunity where she will vindicate her rank or press its claims. In spite of her long-practised Christian humility, she bursts into almost heathen wrath when any one offends the

etiquette due to her, or refuses her the queenly title. Even to death she retains this unquenchable pride, and Shakespeare himself gives these as her last words—

“Embalm me,  
Then lay me forth : although unqueen’d, yet like  
A queen, and daughter to a king, inter me.  
I can no more.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This paper suggests the reflection that to Heine every woman who disregarded the seventh commandment was an angel, and every one who kept it a devil. He finds something divine, adorable, or attractive in Tamora, Cressida, and Cleopatra, even in Margaret, but Queen Katharine is to him altogether repulsive. And all her great and noble qualities are to him absolutely nothing—*because* Doctor Samuel Johnson admired her! All the power of Shakespeare’s genius, he declares, failed to exalt her, *because* “this great pot of porter” praised her. Call you this criticism? It is not even excellent fooling, it is the *fade* frolicking of a freshman trying to seem wicked, while the suggestions that Henry bored his wife with his accomplishments, and she him with her virtues, are wretchedly forced fun of a kind which “has not even novelty for merit.” This misapplied trifling is carried out to the very end, for the last words of Queen Katharine, as given in full in the original text, are inspired with anything but the heathen wrath and evil pride which Heine



directly declares are to be found in them. They are as follows:—

“I thank you, honest lord. Remember me  
 In all humility unto his highness :  
 Say, his long trouble now is passing  
 Out of this world : tell him, in death I bless'd him,  
 For so I will.—Mine eyes grow dim.—Farewell,  
 My lord.—Griffith, farewell.—Nay, Patience,  
 You must not leave me yet. I must to bed ;  
 Call in more women.—When I am dead, good wench,  
 Let me be used with honour ; strew me over  
 With maiden flowers, that all the world may know  
 I was a chaste wife to my grave : embalm me,  
 Then lay me forth : although unqueen'd, yet *like*  
 A queen, and daughter to a king, inter me.  
 I can no more.”<sup>1</sup>

Truly a singular specimen of heathen wrath and unquenchable pride ! Even the garbling or misrepresentation is very bunglingly done, for the Queen declares that she has no longer the title, but simply wishes to be buried as becomes one of her royal birth—only this and nothing more—not *as* a queen, but *like* one. The heathen wrath is here all on the side of Heine. He was a great genius and a learned scholar, but he had his limits, and a character like that of Katharine was as much out of his range of comprehension as his would have been to her.—*Translator.*

<sup>1</sup> *King Henry VIII.*, act iv. sc. 2.

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## ANNE BULLEN.

[KING HENRY VIII.]

IT is generally believed that King Henry's gnawings of conscience for his marriage with Katharine were due to the charms of the beautiful Anne. Even Shakespeare betrays this opinion, and when the new queen appears in the coronation procession he puts these words into the mouth of a young nobleman:—

“Heaven bless thee !  
 Thou hast the sweetest face I ever look'd on.—  
 Sir, as I have a soul, she is an angel ;  
 Our king has all the Indies in his arms,  
 And more, and richer, when he strains that lady ;  
 I cannot blame his conscience.”<sup>1</sup>

The poet also gives us an idea of the beauty of Anne Bullen in the next scene, where he depicts the enthusiasm which her appearance at the coronation produced.

How deeply Shakespeare was devoted to his sovereign, the stately Elizabeth, shows itself perhaps most beautifully in the precision of detail with which he represents the coronation of her mother. All of these details gave colour

<sup>1</sup> *King Henry VIII.*, act iv. sc. 1. It is remarkable that a passage extremely like this occurs in a poem by one of the earlier Icelandic skalds. *Vide* notes to *Thorstens Saga*. Also another in the *Carmina Burana*.

and sanction to the royal rights of the daughter, and the poet well knew how to make the contested legitimacy of his queen clear to the entire public. And this queen deserved such zealous attachment. She thought it no sacrifice of queenly dignity when she authorised the poet to present on the stage with absolute impartiality all her ancestors and even her own father. And it was not only as a queen but as a woman that she proved she would never encroach on the rights of poetry, and as she had granted our poet the greatest liberty of speech in political matters, so she permitted him the boldest expression as to the relations of the sexes. She was not shocked at the most reckless jests of a healthy sensuality, and she, "the maiden queen," the royal virgin, even requested that Sir John Falstaff should show himself as a lover. To her smiling nod<sup>1</sup> we owe the *Merry Wives of Windsor*.

Shakespeare could not have brought his English historical dramas to a better conclusion than by having the new-born infant, Elizabeth, carried over the stage—the glorious future of England in swaddling-clothes.

But did Shakespeare really depict to the life Henry VIII., the father of his queen? Yes,

<sup>1</sup> *Wink*, a sign of intelligence, nod, hint, or wink. In German a nod is truly "as good as a wink."—*Translator*.

for though he did not set forth the truth so vigorously, or in such harsh utterances as in his other dramas, he did at least present it fairly and honestly, and the subdued tone only makes the shadows more impressive. This Henry VIII. was the worst of all kings, for while other evil princes only raged against their foes, he was furious at his friends, and his love was even more dangerous than his hatred. The matrimonial history of this royal Bluebeard is horrible. And with all its horrors he mingled a certain imbecile and cruel gallantry. When he ordered the execution of Anne Bullen he sent her word that he had provided for it the best headsman in all England. The Queen thanked him obsequiously for such a delicate attention, and in her trifling, merry manner, spanned her throat with both hands and said, "It will be easy to behead me, for I have but a little neck!"

Nor is the axe with which she was decapitated a very large one. It was shown me in the armoury of the Tower, and as I held it in my hands a strange thought struck me.

"If I were Queen of England, I would have that axe sunk in the depths of the sea."

## LADY MACBETH.

[MACBETH.]

I TURN from the authentic historical drama to those tragedies whose plots are either purely invented or else drawn from old legends and romances. *Macbeth* forms a transition to such poems, in which the genius of the great Shakespeare spreads its wings most freely and boldly. The substance of it is taken from an old legend, it does not belong to history, and yet the drama makes some demand on historical faith, because the ancestor of the royal house of England played a part in it. For *Macbeth* was first played before James I., who, as is well known, descended from the Scottish Banquo. In this relation the poet has interwoven several prophecies in honour of the reigning dynasty.

*Macbeth* is a favourite subject with critics, who here find opportunity enough to set forth in widest opposition their views as to the antique fatalistic tragedies in comparison with conception of fate by modern tragedians. On this subject I will make merely a fleeting remark.

Shakespeare's idea of destiny differs from that of the ancients, just as the prophetic sorceresses who in the Norse legend meet *Macbeth* promis-

ing sovereignty, differ from the witch-sisterhood which appears in Shakespeare's tragedy. Those wondrous women in the Northern tale are plainly Valkyries, terrible divinities of the air, who, sweeping over battle-fields, determine victory or defeat, and who are to be regarded as the true directresses of human destiny, the last, in the warlike North, being dependent on the issue of battle. Shakespeare changed these into mischief-making witches, stripped them of all the terrible grace and charm of Northern enchantment, made of them hybrid half-women who practise tremendous ghostly delusions, and brew destruction from malicious mischief or at the bidding of hell. They are servants of the evil one, and he who is befooled by their sayings goes body and soul to destruction. Shakespeare has therefore translated the old heathenish deities of fate and their dignified magic blessing into Christian, and the ruin of his hero is therefore not a predetermined necessity, or something absolutely and sternly unavoidable, as in the ancient fate, but the result of those allurements of hell which cast their nets around the human heart. Macbeth succumbs to Satan, the prime evil.<sup>1</sup>

It is interesting to compare the witches of Shakespeare with those of other English poets. We observe that Shakespeare after all could not

<sup>1</sup> Dem Urbösen.



free himself from the old heathen view, and his magic sisters are far more strikingly grand and respectable than those of Middleton, who show far more a meanly malicious, beggarly nature, who practise smaller and more spiteful tricks, who vex the body but have far less power over the soul, and at their utmost can only crust our hearts over with envy, spite, lust, or wantonness, or similar skin eruptions on the heart.

The notoriety of Lady Macbeth, who for two centuries passed for a very bad character, about twelve years ago in Germany took a turn in her favour. The pious Franz Horn—*videlicet*—made the remark in the "Conversations-Lexicon of Brockhaus" that the poor lady had been quite misunderstood, that she was devotedly attached to her husband, and, above all, was really a remarkably amiable person. Herr Ludwig Tieck soon after supported this view with all his science, erudition, and philosophical depth, so that it was not long before we saw Madame Stich on the royal court stage, cooing and turtle-doveing so feelingly, that every heart in Berlin was touched by such tones of tenderness, and many a lovely eye was moved to tears at the sight of that dear sweet Macbeth.<sup>1</sup> This happened, as I said, twelve years ago, in the soft times of the Restoration when we all had so much love in our hearts.

<sup>1</sup> *Beim Anblick der juten Macbeth.* Berlin provincialism.—Translator.

Since then there has been a great bankruptcy, and if we do not now allot to many crowned personages the transcendent love which they deserve, those people are to blame who, like the Queen of Scotland in the period of the Restoration, made utter booty of our hearts.

Whether men still defend in Germany the amiability of this lady, I do not know. Since the revolution of July many views of many things have greatly changed, and it may be that even in Berlin they have learned to perceive that that dear nice Lady Macbeth may be an awfully horrid beast, don'cher know.<sup>1</sup>

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In this paper our author has a little too authoritatively, though very ingeniously, set forth a theory of *Macbeth*, which will hardly bear examination. That the weird sisters were derived from the Valkyries, is just possible. But at a very early time there were, in the North, variations on these, down to witches of the vulgar devilish sort, and all the accounts which were current in Shakespeare's time represent these of Macbeth as being of the latter kind, and as deliberately deceiving and leading him to deadly ruin. That this was so understood in the sixteenth century is absolutely shown by the fact that Grosius, in his *Magica seu mirabilium Historiarum de Spectris et variis Præstigiis et Impos-*

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<sup>1</sup> *Das die jute Macbeth eine sehr bese Bestie sint.*

*turis malorum Dæmonum* (1597), gives under the heading of "Prophecies of devils or evil spirits," the following from Cardanus' *De Rerum Varietate*, lib. 16, cap. 93 :—

"Machabæus (*i.e.*, Macbeth) was in fear, being warned by soothsayers. And a prophetess—*fatidica mulier*—foretold that he would not be slain by a hand born of woman, nor conquered till the wood of Birnen should come to the fortress of Donusinam, not far from where he was. Yet before he was conquered the wood of Birnen came thither, being cut down and carried, so that it surrounded the fortress. And he was finally slain by Magduffus, who was not born but cut from his mother's belly."

Cardanus took the story from Hector Boethius, who simply states that the prophecy was uttered by three women with unusual faces—*tres mulieres insolita faciæ*. Boethius, who was Shakespeare's authority, evidently regarded them as common witches. The same Boethius (Lib. 2, *Hist. Scotorum*) tells us that Duffus, King of the Scots, had a mistress—*cujus mater venefica erat*—whose mother was a poisoning or malicious witch, that is, of the lowest and vilest type. There are a hundred stories in the Norse sagas and chronicles which plainly show that Shakespeare had much more reason to make his prophetesses vulgar witches than Valkyries. And it is certainly absurd to accuse him of stripping from certain characters a *furchtbaren Grazie*, or terrible grace, which he certainly did not find in *his* originals. So far from degrading these originals, the poet actually elevated them, by bestowing that terrible grace, and refining them above the witches of his own time.—*Translator*.

## OPHELIA.

[HAMLET.]

THIS is the poor Ophelia whom Hamlet the Dane loved. She was a beautiful blonde girl, and there was—especially in her speech—a magic which touched my heart, most of all when I would journey to Wittenberg, and went to her father to bid him farewell. The old lord was so kind as to give me on the way all the good counsels of which he himself made so little use, and at last called Ophelia to give us the parting cup. When the dear girl modestly and gently approached me with the salver, and raised her gleaming eyes to mine, in my distraction I grasped an empty instead of a full cup. She laughed at my mistake. Her smile was so wondrous gleaming, and there stole over her lips that intoxicating, melting softness which doubtless came from the kiss-fairies who lurked in the dimples of the mouth.

When I returned from Wittenberg, and the smile of Ophelia gleamed on me again, I forgot all the crafty casuistry of the scholastics, and my deep researches were only on the charming question: "What does this smile set forth—what is the inner meaning of that voice with its mysterious deeply yearning flute-tones? Whence do those

eyes derive their blessed rays? Is it a gleam of heaven, or is heaven but the reflect of those eyes? Is that sweet smile in concord with the silent music of the spheres in their unending dance, or is it but the earthly signature<sup>1</sup> of the most super-sensual harmony?" One day while we wandered in the castle garden of Helsingor, tenderly jesting and wooing, our hearts in the full bloom of hopeful love,—it will ever live in my memory how beggarly the song of the nightingales contrasted with the heavenly breathing voice of Ophelia, and how flat and poor the flowers seemed with their variegated faces without smiles, when I by chance compared them with her excelling-sweet mouth. And the fair slender form like wandering grace swept around and near me—all as in a dream!

Ah! that is the curse of weak mortals, that they ever, when a great mischance occurs, vent their ill temper on the best and dearest. And so poor Hamlet, with his reason—that glorious jewel—flawed, cast himself by a feigned aberration of mind into the most terrible abyss of real madness, and tortured his poor love with scornful jeers. Poor child! All that was wanting was that the beloved should take her father for a rat and stab

<sup>1</sup> *Signatura*, mystical correspondence of the thing created to its archæus or archetypal creator—e.g., *Signatura Rerum* of Swedenborg.—*Translator*.

him dead. Then she must of course go mad. But her madness is not so black and gloomily brooding as that of Hamlet, since it deludes, soothing with sweet songs her poor distracted head. Her soft voice melts away in music, and flowers, and still more flowers, entwine themselves in all her thoughts. She sings while plaiting wreaths to deck her brow, and smiles with gleaming smiles—alas, poor child!

*Laer.* Drown'd! O, where?

*Queen.* There is a willow grows ascaunt the brook,  
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream;  
Therewith fantastic garlands did she make  
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies; and long purples,  
That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,  
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them:  
There on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds  
Clambering to hang, an envious sliwer broke;  
When down her weedy trophies, and herself,  
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide;  
And, mermaid-like, a while they bore her up:  
Which time, she chanted snatches of old tunes;  
As one incapable of her own distress,  
Or like a creature native and indued  
Unto that element: but long it could not be  
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,  
Pulled the poor wretch from her melodious lay  
To muddy death."<sup>1</sup>

Yet why should I tell you this sad history?  
You all knew it from your childhood, and have

<sup>1</sup> *Hamlet*, act iv. sc. 7.



wept often enough over the old tragedy of Hamlet the Dane, who loved the fair Ophelia far more than a thousand brothers could, with all their united love, and who went mad because the ghost of his father appeared to him, and because the world was out of its course and he felt himself too weak to set it straight, and because he in German Wittenberg had from too much thinking forgotten practical business, and because he had the choice to go mad or do something desperate—and finally because he, as a mortal man, had above all things in himself a strong tendency to madness.

We know Hamlet as well as we do our own face, which we so often see in the mirror, and yet which is far less known to us than one would think; for if we were to meet any one in the street who looked exactly like ourselves, we would gaze at the startling, strange, familiar face only instinctively, and with a secret dread, without remarking that it is our features which we have just seen.

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### CORDELIA.

[KING LEAR.]

“THERE are in this play,” says an English author, “man-traps and spring-guns for the

reader." Another remarks that this tragedy is a labyrinth in which the commentator may go astray and be in danger of death from the Minotaur who lurks therein, therefore he should only use the critical scalpel in self-defence. And as it is indeed always a delicate and doubtful task to criticise Shakespeare, from whose words the sharpest criticism of our own thoughts and deeds laughs out, so it is almost impossible to judge him in this tragedy, where his genius leaped and climbed to the giddiest height.

I dare venture no further than the gate of this marvellous mansion, only to the introduction, which of itself awakens our astonishment. The introductions in Shakespeare's tragedies are indeed worthy of all wonder and admiration. In these first scenes we are at once rapt out of our work-day feelings and business thoughts, and transported to the midst of the vast events with which the poet will convulse and purify our souls. So the tragedy of *Macbeth* begins with the meeting of the witches, and their weird sayings subdue not only the heart of the Scottish war-chief, who appears intoxicated with victory, but also the hearts of us the spectators, so that we are bound fast till all is fulfilled and ended. As in *Macbeth* the desolate, sense-and-soul-benumbing horror of the bloody world of magic at once seizes on us, so we are frozen by the awe of the pale realm of

shadows in the scene of *Hamlet*, and we cannot free ourselves from the spectral feelings of the night, or from the nightmare pressure of the uncanny gloomy dread, till all is accomplished, and till the air of Denmark, which was redolent of human corruption, is once again made pure.

In the first scenes of *Lear* we are in like manner directly drawn into the strange destinies which are announced, unfolded, and ended before our eyes. The poet here gives us a drama which is more appalling than all the horrors of the world of magic and the realm of ghosts; for he shows us human passion breaking all the bounds of reason, and raging forth in the royal majesty of a monarch's madness — vieing with stormy nature in her wildest commotion. But I believe that here there is an end to the immense power, the wondrous play of *will*, with which Shakespeare ever masters his material. Here his own genius bears him away, and sways him far more than in *Macbeth* and *Hamlet*, where he, with perfectly artistic self-possession, depicts the darkest shadows of the night of the soul mingled with the rosiest gleams of wit, and the brightest and most cheerful still-life by the wildest deeds. Yes, in the tragedy of *Macbeth* a soft and soothing nature smiles on us; to the turrets of the towers of the castle where the bloodiest deed is done cleave quiet'swallows' nests; a cheerful Scottish summer

air, not too warm or cool, blows through the whole play; everywhere there are beautiful trees and green foliage, and at the end an entire forest comes marching in, when Birnam wood doth come to Dunsinane. In *Hamlet* also the loveliness of nature contrasts with the heat of the action; though it may be black night in the heart of the hero, the sun rises not less beautifully in morning red, and Polonius is an amusing fool, and comedies are calmly played, and poor Ophelia sits among green trees, and with pretty motley posies binds her wreath.

But in *Lear* no such contrasts prevail between the action and nature, and the unbridled elements howl and storm in emulation with the mad king. Does a moral event of most unusual kind also act on the so-called soulless nature? Is there indeed between this and the mind of man an external visible relationship? Had our poet ever experienced this, and did he strive to depict it?

With the first scene of this tragedy we are, as I have said, put at once into the midst of events; and clear as the sky may be, a sharp eye can foresee the coming storm. There is a little cloud already in the intellect of *Lear*, which will thicken anon to the blackest mental night. He who in such fashion gives all away, must be already mad. We learn perfectly the spirit of the hero, and the character of the daughter, even in the first act,

and we are deeply moved by the mute tenderness of Cordelia, the modern Antigone, who in depth of soul and feeling surpasses her antique sister. Yes, she is a pure soul, as the king first sees when he is mad. Quite pure? I believe that she is a little self-willed, and this small spot is a birth-mark from the father. But true love is very modest, and hates all cram of words; she can only weep and bleed. The sad bitterness with which Cordelia plays upon the hypocrisy of her sisters is of the most delicate kind, and has all the character of that irony which the Master of all Love, the hero of the gospel, sometimes employed. Her soul relieves itself of the justest indignation, and displays all her nobility in the words:—

“Sure, I shall never marry like my sisters,  
To love my father all.”<sup>1</sup>

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### JULIA.

[ROMEO AND JULIET.]

EVERY Shakespearean play has its peculiar climate, its own time of year, and its local attributes. And like the characters in every one of these dramas, so have the soil and sky their own marked physiognomy. Here, in *Romeo and Julia*,<sup>2</sup> we

<sup>1</sup> *King Lear*, act i. sc. i.

<sup>2</sup> Heine gives this name as *Julie*, Shakespeare as *Juliet*.

have crossed the Alps, and find ourselves in that fair garden called Italia:—

“Know'st thou the country where the lemon blows,  
And in dark leaves the golden orange glows?”

It is sunny Verona which Shakespeare has chosen for the stage of the great deeds of love which he has glorified in *Romeo and Julia*. Yes, it is not this loving pair, but Love himself, who takes the leading part in this drama. Here we see love rising in youthful daring, defying all opposing circumstance, and all conquering. For he fears not in the great battle to take refuge with his most terrible, yet truest ally, Death. Love hand in hand with death is invincible. Love! It is the highest and most victorious of all passions. But its world-subduing strength lies in its illimitable grandeur of soul, its almost supernatural unselfishness, in its unsacrificing scorn of life. There is for it no yesterday, and it thinks of no to-morrow. It asks only for to-day, but asks for it all in full and free from care—untroubled, undiminished. It will save nothing up for future time, and scorns the warmed-up leavings of the past. “Night be before me and the night behind.” It is a wandering flame between two darknesses. Whence came it? From an infinitely petty spark. How will it end? Without a trace, and unintelligibly. The wilder it burns the sooner it is



quenched. But that does not hinder it when it has once given itself up to the flaring impulse, as if the fire would last for ever.

Ah, when one feels for the second time in life the great glow, unfortunately the faith in its eternal durance fails, and the bitterest recollection whispers to us that this in the end, too, will devour itself. Hence the difference in melancholy in the first love and in the second. In the first, we think that our passion can only end tragically by death, and indeed when the opposing threatening difficulties are invincible we easily make up our minds to hurry with the loved one to the grave. On the contrary, in a second love we know that our wildest and noblest feelings will turn with time into a tender tameness, and that we shall yet regard with calm indifference the eyes, the lips, the limbs which now inspire us so wildly. Ah, this thought is more melancholy than that of death. For it is a sad comfortless feeling when we in the glow of intoxication think of future sobriety and coolness, and know from experience that the highly poetic heroic passion must have such a pitifully prosaic end!

These highly poetic heroic passions! How the princesses of the theatre bear themselves, and warmly rouged, splendidly dressed, laden with flashing gems, walk proudly o'er the scene declaiming in measured iambics. But when the

curtain falls the poor princess once more puts on her common clothes, washes the rouge from her cheeks, hands over her adornments to the one who has care of the costumes, and dangling slovenly she hangs on the arm of the first best young third-rate legal official<sup>1</sup> who may come along, talks bad Berlin German, climbs with him up to a garret, and yawns, stretching herself out, hardly heeding the sweet assurance that *Sie spielten jettlich, auf Ehre!* “You played divinely—you just did—’pon honour!”

I do not venture to find the least fault with Shakespeare, and would only express my wonder that he makes Romeo feel a passion for Rosalind before he brings him to Julia. Though he gives himself up utterly to this second love, there still nestles in his heart a certain scepticism, which makes itself known in ironical expressions, and often reminds us of Hamlet. Or is the second love the strongest in the man because it is coupled with clear self-consciousness? With woman there is no second love, her nature is too tender to suffer her to survive a second time the most terrible earthquake of feeling. Look at Julia! Is *she* able to twice endure the

<sup>1</sup> *Und schlotternd hängt sie sich an dem Arm des ersten besten Stadtgerichtsreferendarii.* This portentous name is applied to a lawyer without salary attached to the municipal administration of justice; naturally a man of limited means.

transcendent raptures and terrors, and, defying all anguish, empty again the dreadful cup. I believe she had quite enough of it the first time, the poor blest creature, this pure sacrifice of the great passion.

Julia loves for the first time, and loves with the full healthiness of love and soul. She is fourteen years old, which in Italy means as much as seventeen by the Northern standard. She is a rosebud which is kissed before our eyes by Romeo's lips, and which blossoms out in youthful fulness and beauty. She has not learned what love is from worldly or religious books, the sun has told it to her and the moon repeated it, and her heart re-echoed it when she by night believed herself to be alone. But Romeo stood beneath the balcony and heard it all, and took her at her word. The character of her love is truth and earnestness. The maid breathes honesty and truth, and it is touching to the heart when she speaks thus:—

*“Jul.* Thou know'st the mask of night is on my face ;  
 Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek,  
 For that which thou hast heard me speak to-night.  
 Fain would I dwell on form, fain, fain deny  
 What I have spoke ; but farewell compliment !  
 Dost love me ? I know, thou wilt say—Ay ;  
 And I will take thy word : yet, if thou swear'st  
 Thou mayst prove false ; at lovers' perjuries,  
 They say, Jove laughs. O gentle Romeo,

If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully :  
 Or if thou think'st I am too quickly won,  
 I'll frown and be perverse, and say thee nay,  
 So thou wilt woo ; but, else, not for the world.  
 In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond ;  
 And therefore thou mayst think my haviour light :  
 But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove more true  
 Than those that have more cunning to be strange.  
 I should have been more strange, I must confess,  
 But that thou overheard'st, ere I was ware,  
 My true love's passion : therefore pardon me ;  
 And not impute this yielding to light love,  
 Which the dark night hath so discovered."<sup>1</sup>

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In this paper there is a great relapse from excellence, so much so that it may be almost classed as a pure *pièce de manufacture*. The remarks on first love are merely a repetition of commonplaces which have been better uttered "many a time and oft" by others, and the actress princess, with her rouge and third-class lover, and Berlin dialect, is a careless repetition of the same simile, in almost the same words, in the comment on Constance. Heine assumes in these remarks that all men have their full mental development at the time of their first love, and that it is the same tremendous and overwhelming phase of passion in all, whereas in most cases it is true that no man ever became a fully developed lover, any more than a fully fledged criminal, all at once. For the development even of a critical taste in food and wines is a matter of education and

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<sup>1</sup> *Romeo and Juliet*, act ii. sc. 2.

experience, and love, like every passion, is guided, though it may not be created, by culture, on which view Heine himself could have written congenially, genially, and ingeniously, had his heart been, like the Irish poet's, "in his pen."

Shakespeare has shown in every utterance which he has given to lovers the fullest conviction that the greatest love occurs where highly cultivated intellect combines with passion—and of this idea there is not a trace in the present remarks of Heine. Heine expresses astonishment that Shakespeare makes Romeo first feel a passion for Rosalind, because he had not learned that the poet wished to show that in a man "who is like Hamlet" passion and culture go hand in hand and advance. And though this is less the case with women, yet in Cleopatra love's strongest passion is its last.

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### DESDEMONA.

[OTHELLO.]

I HAVE incidentally remarked in the foregoing paper that the character of Romeo has in it something of Hamlet. In fact, a Northern serious earnestness casts its side-shadows on this glowing mind. And if we compare Julia with Desdemona, the same Northern element appears in all the power of her passion; she is always self-conscious,

and in clearest self-consciousness mistress of her deeds. Julia loves and thinks and acts—Desdemona loves, feels and obeys not her own will, but the stronger impulse. Her admirable excellence lies in this, that the bad can in no respect act on her noble nature like the good. She would certainly have remained in the palazzo of her father, a modest child fulfilling household duties; but the voice of the Moor was heard, and though she looked down she saw his countenance in his words, in his stories of his life, or, as she says, in his soul, and this suffering, magnanimous, beautiful white face of the soul wrought on her heart with irresistibly attracting magic. Yes, her father, the dignified and wise Brabantio, was quite in the right; she was so bound in chains of magic that the timid, tender child felt herself drawn to the Moor, and had no fear of the hideous black mask which the multitude regarded as the face of Othello.

Julia's love is active, that of Desdemona passive. She is the sunflower, herself unconscious that her head is ever turned toward the high star of day. She is a true daughter of the South—tender, sensitive, patient, like those slender, great-eyed lights of women who beam so lovingly, so softly and dreamily, from the Sanscrit poems or plays. She ever reminds me of the Sakuntala of Kalidasa, the Indian Shakespeare.



The English engraver to whom we are indebted for the present picture of Desdemona has given to her great eyes a somewhat too strong expression of passion. But I believe that I have already remarked that the contrast between face and character always has its peculiar charm. In any case this face is very fair, and it must specially please the writer of these pages that it recalls that noble and beautiful woman who, thank God!—never found any deep defect in his own face, and who as yet has only seen it in his soul.

. " *Othello*. Her father loved me ; oft invited me ;  
 Still question'd me the story of my life,  
 From year to year ; the battles, sieges, fortunes,  
 That I have pass'd.  
 I ran it through, even from my boyish days,  
 To the very moment that he bade me tell it.  
 Wherein I spoke of most disastrous chances,  
 Of moving accidents, by flood and field ;  
 Of hair-breadth 'scapes i' the imminent deadly breach ;  
 Of being taken by the insolent foe,  
 And sold to slavery ; of my redemption thence,  
 And portance in my travel's history :  
 Wherein of antres vast, and deserts idle,  
 Rough quarries, rocks, and hills whose heads touch heaven,  
 It was my hint to speak, such was the process ;  
 And of the Cannibals that each other eat,  
 The Anthropophagi, and men whose heads  
 Do grow beneath their shoulders. These things to hear,  
 Would Desdemona seriously incline :  
 But still the house affairs would draw her thence ;  
 Which ever as she could with haste despatch,

She'd come again, and with a greedy ear  
Devour up my discourse : Which I observing,  
Took once a pliant hour ; and found good means  
To draw from her a prayer of earnest heart,  
That I would all my pilgrimage dilate,  
Whereof by parcels she had something heard,  
But not intentively : I did consent ;  
And often did beguile her of her tears,  
When I did speak of some distressful stroke,  
That my youth suffer'd. My story being done,  
She gave me for my pains a world of sighs :  
She swore,—In faith, 'twas strange, 'twas passing strange ;  
'Twas pitiful, 'twas wondrous pitiful :  
She wish'd she had not heard it, yet she wish'd  
That Heaven had made her such a man : she thank'd me,  
And bade me, if I had a friend that loved her,  
I should but teach him how to tell my story,  
And that would woo her. Upon this hint, I spake ;  
She loved me for the dangers I had pass'd ;  
And I loved her, that she did pity them.  
This only is the witchcraft I have used ;  
Here comes the lady, let her witness it." <sup>1</sup>

This tragedy is believed to be the last work of Shakespeare, as *Titus Andronicus* was the first. In both the love of a fair lady for an ugly negro is treated with predilection. The man matured, returned to the problem which had busied his youth. Has he here found the solution of it? Is this solution as true as it is beautiful? A gloomy grieving seizes me when I give place to

<sup>1</sup> *Othello*, act i. sc. 3.

the thought that the honourable Iago, with his evil comments on the love of Desdemona for the Moor, is not all in the wrong. Most repulsive of all to me are Othello's remarks on the damp hand of his wife.

There is just such a marvellous and significant example of love for a negro, such as we see in *Titus Andronicus* and *Othello*, in the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments," where a beautiful princess, who is also a sorceress, keeps her husband bound in a statue-like immovability, and beats him daily with rods because he slew her negro lover. Heartrending are the wails of the princess over the bier of the black corpse, which she by her magic art keeps in a kind of apparent life and covers with the kisses of despair, and which she would fain, by the greater magic of love, wake from its twilight-dimmering half death to the full truth of life. Even as a boy I was struck in reading the Arabian tale with this picture of passionate and incomprehensible love.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> There are among the legends of the peasants in the Romagna Toscana two which strangely recall this comment. One is of a lady who becomes *enceinte* by merely looking at a black or Moorish wizard, the other is of a young girl who keeps under her bed in a chest the petrified body of her dead lover, which she every night "covers with the kisses of despair," as Heine describes it.—*Translator*.

## JESSICA.

[THE MERCHANT OF VENICE.]

WHEN I saw this piece played in Drury Lane there stood behind me in the box a pale British beauty who, at the end of the fourth act, wept passionately, and many times cried out, "The poor man is wronged!" It was a countenance of noblest Grecian cut, and the eyes were large and black. I have never been able to forget them, those great black eyes which wept for Shylock!

When I think of those tears I must include the *Merchant of Venice* among the tragedies, although the frame of the work is a composition of laughing masks and sunny faces, satyr forms and amorets, as though the poet meant to make a comedy. Shakespeare perhaps intended originally to please the mob, to represent a thorough going wehr-wolf, a hated fabulous being who yearns for blood, and pays for it with daughter and with ducats, and is over and above laughed to scorn. But the genius of the poet, the spirit of the wide world which ruled in him, was ever stronger than his own will, and so it came to pass that he in Shylock, despite the glaring grotesqueness, expressed the justification of an unfortunate sect which was oppressed by providence, from inscrutable motives, with the

hatred of the lower and higher class, and which did not always return this hate with love.<sup>1</sup>

But what do I say? The genius of Shakespeare rises still higher over the petty strife of two religious sects, and his drama shows us neither Jews nor Christians, but oppressors and oppressed, and the madly agonised cries of exultation of the latter when they can repay their arrears of injuries with interest. There is not in this play the least trace of difference in religion, and Shakespeare sets forth in Shylock a man whom nature bade hate his enemies, just as he in Antonio and his friends by no means expresses the disciples of that divine doctrine which commands us to love our enemies. When Shylock says to the man who would borrow money of him :—

“Signor Antonio, many a time and oft,  
In the Rialto, you have rated me  
About my monies and my usances :  
Still have I borne it with a patient shrug ;

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<sup>1</sup> This assertion that Shakespeare *meant* to make a wild beast of Shylock, but was compelled *volens volens* by his better nature to depict him as “the only decent man in the play,” recalls the fact that when the German army entered Paris there was a small part of the city to which the invaders did not penetrate. On which the local press declared that the barbarian foe, struck by the moral grandeur of the French, had not *dared* to advance further. It is probable, if not certain, that Shakespeare knew what he meant to write quite as well as any critic of the present day, or even Heine.

For suffrance is the badge of all our tribe :  
 You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog,  
 And spit upon my Jewish gaberdine,  
 And all for use of that which is mine own.  
 Well, then, it now appears you need my help :  
 Go to, then ; you come to me, and you say,  
 ‘Shylock, we would have monies :’—you say so ;  
 You, that did void your rheum upon my beard,  
 And foot me, as you spurn a stranger cur  
 Over your threshold : monies is your suit.  
 What should I say to you ? Should I not say  
 ‘Hath a dog money ? Is it possible,  
 A cur can lend three thousand ducats ?’ or  
 Shall I bend low, and in a bondman’s key,  
 With ’bated breath and whisp’ring humbleness,  
 Say this,—  
 ‘Fair sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last ;  
 You spurn’d me such a day ; another time  
 You call’d me dog ; and for these courtesies  
 I’ll lend you thus much monies ?’”<sup>1</sup>

To which Antonio replies :—

“ I am as like to call thee so again,  
 To spit on thee again, to spurn thee too.”

Where is the Christian love in this? Truly Shakespeare would have written a satire against Christianity if he had made it consist of those characters who are the enemies of Shylock, but who are hardly worthy to unlace his shoes. The bankrupt Antonio is a weak creature without energy, without strength of hatred, and as little

<sup>1</sup> *Merchant of Venice*, act i. sc. 3.



of love, a melancholy worm-heart whose flesh is really worth nothing save "to bait fish withal." He does not repay the swindled Jew the three thousand ducats. Nor does Bassanio repay him—this man is, as an English critic calls him, a real fortune-hunter; he borrows money to make a display so as to win a rich wife and a fat bridal portion, for as he says to his friend:—

"'Tis not unknown to you, Antonio,  
 How much I have disabled mine estate,  
 By something showing a more swelling port  
 Than my faint means would grant continuance:  
 Nor do I now make moan to be abridg'd  
 From such a noble rate; but my chief care  
 Is, to come fairly off from the great debts,  
 Wherein my time, something too prodigal,  
 Hath left me gag'd. To you, Antonio,  
 I owe the most, in money and in love;  
 And from your love I have a warranty  
 To unburthen all my plots and purposes,  
 How to get clear of all the debts I owe."<sup>1</sup>

As for Lorenzo, he is the accomplice of a most infamous theft, and according to the laws of Prussia he would have been branded, set in the pillory, and condemned to fifteen years' imprisonment, notwithstanding his susceptibility to the beauties of nature, landscapes by moonlight, and music. As for the other noble Venetians who appear as allies of Antonio, they do not seem to have

<sup>1</sup> *Merchant of Venice*, act i. sc. 1.

any special antipathy to money, and when their poor friend is in difficulties they have nothing for him but words or minted air. Our good pious friend Franz Horn here makes the following very thin and watery, but still quite correct, remark: "Here it is but fair to inquire: How is it possible that Antonio's misfortune went so far? All Venice knew and esteemed him, his excellent acquaintances knew all about the terrible bond, and also that the Jew would not abate so much as a point of punctuation from it. Yet they let one day pass after another, till at last the three months expired, and with them every hope of rescue. Surely it would have been an easy thing for those good friends, of whom the royal merchant had a multitude, to raise three thousand ducats to save a human life—and such a life!—but such a thing is always rather inconvenient, and so the dear good friends, because they are only so-called friends, or half or three-quarter friends, do—nothing, nothing still and naught again. They pity the excellent merchant who formerly gave them such fine feasts; scold terribly with all their hearts and tongues, though only at fitting opportunity, at Shylock, a thing incurring no danger, and then think they have done all that friendship requires. Much as we must hate Shylock we can hardly take it amiss of him that he despises this folk a little, as he well may do. Indeed he seems to confuse

even Gratiano, who is excused by his absence, in one and the same class, when he dismisses summarily the previous lack of deeds and presentfulness of words with the remark :—

“Till thou canst rail the seal from off my bond,  
Thou but offend'st thy lungs to speak so loud :  
Repair thy wit, good youth, or it will fall  
To cureless ruin.—I stand here for law.”<sup>1</sup>

Or is, perhaps, Launcelot Gobbo here the representative of Christianity? Singularly enough, Shakespeare has nowhere expressed himself so clearly as to this, as in the dialogue which this rogue holds with his mistress. To Jessica's assertion—

“I shall be saved by my husband ; he hath made me a Christian.”

Launcelot Gobbo replies—

“Truly, the more to blame he : we were Christians enow before ; e'en as many as could well live, one by another. This making of Christians will raise the price of hogs : if we grow all to be pork-eaters, we shall not shortly have a rasher on the coals for money.”<sup>2</sup>

In fact, with the exception of Portia, Shylock is the most respectable person in the whole piece. He loves money, he does not conceal it—he cries it aloud in the public market-place. But there is one thing which he esteems above money, it

<sup>1</sup> *Merchant of Venice*, act iv. sc. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, act iii. sc. 5.

is satisfaction for his injured feelings—the just retribution for unspeakable insults; and though the borrowed sum be offered him tenfold he refuses it, and he does not regret the three thousand, or ten times three thousand, ducats if he can buy a pound of the flesh of the heart of his enemy. “Thou wilt not take his flesh: what’s that good for?” asks Salarino. And he replies:—

“To bait fish withal: if it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge. He hath disgraced me, and hindered me of half a million; laughed at my losses, mocked at my gains, scorned my nation, thwarted my bargains, cooled my friends, heated mine enemies; and what’s his reason? I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? if you prick us, do we not bleed? if you tickle us, do we not laugh? if you poison us, do we not die? and if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? if we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility? revenge: if a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his suffrance be by Christian example? why, revenge. The villainy you teach me, I will execute; and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction.”<sup>1</sup>

No, Shylock loves money, but there are things which he loves more, among others his daughter.

<sup>1</sup> *Merchant of Venice*, act iii. sc. 1.

“Jessica, my child.” Though he curses her in the greatest passion of wrath, and would fain see her dead at his feet, with the jewels in her ears and with the ducats in her coffin, he still loves her more than all ducats and jewels. Excluded from public life and Christian society, and forced into the narrow consolation of domestic happiness, there remain to the poor Jew only family feelings, and these come forth from him with the most touching tenderness. The turquoise, the ring which his wife Leah once gave him, he would not exchange for “a wilderness of monkeys.” When in the judgment scene Bassanio speaks thus to Antonio:—

“Antonio, I am married to a wife  
Which is as dear to me as life itself ;  
But life itself, my wife, and all the world,  
Are not with me esteem'd above thy life :  
I would lose all, ay, sacrifice them all  
Here to this devil, to deliver you.”

To which Gratiano adds:—

“I have a wife, whom, I protest, I love :  
I would she were in heaven, so she could  
Entreat some power to change this currish Jew.”<sup>1</sup>

Then there awakes in Shylock a dreadful apprehension as to the fate of his daughter, married

<sup>1</sup> *Merchant of Venice*, act iv. sc. 1.

among men who will sacrifice their wives for their friends, and aside, not aloud, he says to himself:—

“These be the Christian husbands ! I have a daughter ;  
 Would any of the stock of Barrabas  
 Had been her husband, rather than a Christian !”<sup>1</sup>

This passage—this casual word—is the basis of the condemnation which we must pronounce of the fair Jessica. It was not an unloving father whom she robbed and abandoned. Shameful deceit ! She even makes common cause with the enemies of Shylock, and when they at Belmont say all manner of evil things of him, Jessica does not cast down her eyes, nor do her lips grow white—no, Jessica herself says the worst things of her father. Atrocious wickedness ! She has no feeling, only a love of what is remarkable and romantic. She is wearied and *ennuyée* in the closely shut “honourable” house of the stern and bitter Jew, which at last appears to her to be a hell. Her frivolous heart was all too easily attracted by the lively notes of the drum, and the wry-necked fife. Did Shakespeare here mean to sketch a Jewess ? Indeed no ; what he depicts is only a daughter of Eve, one of those beautiful birds, who, when they are fledged, fly away from the paternal nest to the beloved man. So Desde-

<sup>1</sup> *Merchant of Venice*, act iv. sc. 1.



mona followed the Moor, so Imogene Posthumus. That is woman's way. We may remark in Jessica a certain timid shame which she cannot overcome when she must put on a boy's dress. It may be that in this we recognise the remarkable chastity which is peculiar<sup>1</sup> to her race, and which gives its daughters such a wonderfully lovely charm. The chastity of the Jews is perhaps the result of an opposition which they always maintained against that Oriental religion of sense and sensuality which once flourished among their neighbours the Egyptians, Phœnicians, Assyrians, and Babylonians in rankest luxuriance, and which in continual transformation has survived to the present day.<sup>1</sup> The Jews are a chaste, temperate, I might say an abstract race, and in purity of morals they are most nearly allied to the Germanic races. The chastity of the women among Jews and Germans is perhaps of no real value in itself, but its manifestation makes the most

<sup>1</sup> *Eigen*, own, proper. *Eigens*, particularly, especially.

<sup>2</sup> Of all which charming chastity and opposition to sensual worship, Heine elsewhere in many places expresses a very sincere detestation; as, for instance, in the "Rabbi of Bacharach," where he unquestionably portrays himself as the Spanish Jew, and declares that if he had lived of old in Judea he would have skipped over some fine morning to jolly Babylon. As he certainly would have done. And it may be also remarked, as regards the next sentence, that it is hardly consistent to declare that anything can be in itself *worthless* and yet always produce marvellous results!—*Translator*.

fascinating, charmingly sweet, and deeply moving impression. It is touching even to tears when we read that after the defeat of the Cimbri and Teutones, the women begged Marius not to give them over to the soldiery, but to make them slaves in the temple of Vesta.

It is indeed wonderful what a deep elective affinity prevails between both races, Jews and Germans. This chosen alliance did not originate in a historical course, because the great family chronicle of the Jews, or the Bible, was used by the whole Germanic world, nor because both races were from early times foes to the Romans, and were thereby naturally allies; it has a deeper ground, the two being so much alike that one might regard primæval Palestine as an Oriental Germany, just as one might regard the Germany of to-day as the home of the Holy Word, for the mother-soil of prophetdom, for the citadel of the Holy Spirit.<sup>1</sup>

But it is not Germany alone which bears the physiognomy of Palestine; all Europe raises itself to the Jews. I say raises itself, because in the beginning the Jews had the modern principle in themselves which is at the present day developing itself for the first time.

Greeks and Romans held as if inspired to their native soil—to the Fatherland. The later

<sup>1</sup> *Geistheit*, spirit-hood, spirituality.

Northern immigrants to the Græco-Roman world were attached to the persons of their chiefs, and instead of antique patriotism the Middle Ages witnessed the faith of vassals and loyalty to princes. But the Jews always held to and revered that *Law* or an abstract conception, like our new cosmopolite republicans, who care neither for the country of their birth nor the persons of princes, but regard laws as leading principles or the highest. Yes, cosmopolitanism sprung from the land of Judea alone, and Christ, who, despite the displeasure of the before-mentioned Hamburg grocer, was a real Jew, actually founded a propaganda of cosmopolitanism. As for the republicanism of the Jews, I remember to have read in Josephus that there were in Jerusalem republicans who opposed the royally-inclined Herodians, fought them fiercely, and called no man "master," and hated Roman absolutism most bitterly. Freedom and equality was their religion. What madness!

But what is the real reason for that hatred which we see here in Europe between the adherents of the Mosaic law and the teaching of Christ to the present day, and of which the poet, illustrating general principles by facts, gives us a terrible picture in *The Merchant of Venice*. Is it the original fraternal hatred which we saw flame forth between Cain and Abel caused by different

methods of sacrifice? Or is religion only a pretence, and do men hate one another simply to hate, just as they love to love? On which side is the guilt in this animosity? I cannot here refrain from giving as an answer to this question an extract from a private letter, which also justifies the foes of Shylock:—<sup>1</sup>

“I do not condemn the hatred with which the common people persecute the Jews, I condemn the unfortunate errors which caused that hatred. The people are always in the right; in their hate as in their love there is always at bottom a perfectly correct instinct, but they do not know how to put emotions properly into shape, and so, instead of the proper subject, their grudge falls on the innocent scapegoat of the disorders and dissensions of time or place. The mob is in want, it lacks the means to enjoy life, and though the high priest of the religion of state assures it that man is here on earth to endure and suffer, and to obey the authorities in spite of hunger and thirst, still the people have secret yearnings for what gratifies their senses, and they hate those in

<sup>1</sup> Our author here appears to have quite forgotten that he has already perfectly and very piously accounted for all the persecution of the Jews, by informing us that it was due to “a mysterious dispensation of Providence.” *Die Vorsehung aus geheimnissvollen Gründen*. Surely after this it was hardly consistent to attempt to explain it like a mere irreligious rationalist!

whose chests and safes their means thereunto lie hoarded up, they hate the rich, and are glad when religion permits them to give full swing to this hatred. The common people hated in the Jews only the owners of money—it was always the heaped-up metal which attracted the lightning of popular wrath to the Jews. The spirit of the times gave its password or parole to that hatred. In the Middle Ages it bore the gloomy colour of the Catholic Church and people, killed Jews and plundered their houses because they crucified Christ, with quite the same logic certain black Christians at the time of the massacre in San Domingo paraded about with a picture of Christ on the cross and fanatically cried: *Les blancs l'ont tué, tuons nous les blancs!*<sup>1</sup>

My friend, you laugh at the poor negroes; but I assure you that the West Indian planters did

<sup>1</sup> Heine would have been charmed (had he ever heard of it) with an incident which once occurred in California. A Chinaman who had heard some dim account of the Crucifixion, and of which all he remembered was that it had been an exceedingly discreditable transaction to all concerned, had a quarrel with a Jew, and in anger, cried: "My savvy you—you one-piecee bad man—you velly bad man—you killee Melican man's Joss." The conduct of the St. Domingo blacks recalls a passage from a negro sermon which was delivered in Philadelphia: "My hyarers—bress de Lawd, dere was'n no cullered folks at de Crucifixion. De Bible doesn't mention one single nigga's bein' dar. Of cose dere was plenty of 'em in Jerusalem, else who'd a done de wite-washin' an' waitin'? But dey had too much sense to 'tend to any such doin's as crucifyin' folks."—*Translator.*



not laugh when they were massacred in expiation to Christ, as the European Jews had been a few centuries before. But the black Christians of San Domingo were quite in the right. The whites lived idly in full enjoyment of all pleasures, while the negro who worked for them in the sweat of his black brow got for pay a little rice-meal and very many lashes—the blacks were the common folk.

“We no longer live in the Middle Ages; the common folk themselves are more enlightened,—they no longer kill the Jews dead at sight, nor palliate their hatred with religion; our age is no longer so hot with religious zeal, the traditional grudge veils itself with modern figures of speech, and the lower orders in the pot-houses declaim against the Jews, like their betters in the chamber of deputies, with mercantile, industrial, scientific, or even philosophical arguments. Only utter hypocrites continue to give their hatred a religious hue and persecute Jews on account of Christ; the great multitude confesses that material interests are what are really at stake, and will by all possible means make the realisation of their industrial capacities impossible to Jews. Here in Frankfort, for example, only twenty-four believers in the law of Moses can be married annually, lest their population should increase and thereby too much competition with Christian business people



be created. Here the real reason for hating the Jews shows itself with its true face, and this face has not the gloomy fanatical features of a monk, but the flabby tricky traits of a tradesman who with fear works in business, as in behaviour, to keep from being beaten by the Jewish commercial spirit.

“But is it the fault of the Jews that this business-spirit has twined itself round them in such a threatening manner? The guilt lies entirely in that lunacy with which man in the Middle Ages ignored the meaning of industry, regarding trade as something ignoble, even that in money as something accursed, and therefore gave that most profitable part of all business over to the Jews, so that these latter, being excluded from all other occupations, necessarily became the most refined and expert merchants and bankers. The world *compelled* them to become rich, and then hated them for their wealth, and though Christianity has laid aside its prejudices against industry, and the Christians have become in trade and industry as great rascals and as rich as the Jews, still the old popular hatred against the latter survives, the people persist in seeing in them always the representatives of money, and hate them. You see that in history every one is in the right, the hammer as well as the anvil.”

It is much to be regretted that our author should in this paper have so much lost sight of his text or subject, or that, as regards these last sentences, his "friend" should, in his lofty scorn for "finance" and "tradesmen," have employed the worn-out, false, and feeble plea that Jews were *forced* into becoming bankers and men of business. In this *fin de siècle*, when business is regarded as a great and noble science, and allied to, when not identical with, diplomacy, social science, and philanthropy, it is no discredit to have been the great agents of commerce, even in the days of chivalry. It is very evident, indeed, that the Jews, in common with the Phœnicians and all Semitic races, were always keen men of business, even while they were warriors. The buying up of grain by Joseph, and the testimony of Latin writers, indicate that this was recognised long before the Middle Ages. A race who could have invented, or introduced, bills of exchange in the tenth century, but who were in all probability familiar with them in the great banking houses of Assyria during the Captivity, probably required no extreme pressure to make them discount bills. As Heine informed the reader in the paper on Queen Margaret, that all the English chivalry and knighthood was mere greed and managed in the interests of bankers and shopmen, he should in fairness have made this exception when subsequently declaring that gentlemen in the Middle Ages never had anything to do with such repulsive occupations. The Jews were not forced into business, they entered Europe already passed grand-masters of it—to their great credit be it spoken—and, aided by

other influences, they forced society into it. It never seems to have occurred to Heine that this was a subject for pride; he invariably appears like the swell in *Punch*, who had a great horror of business. And he also forgets something, of which his text should have reminded him, that in Italy, especially in Venice, the noblest and most aristocratic Christian families were engaged in commerce and banking. It is not yet settled whether the three balls of the pawn-brokers were derived from the arms of the Lombards, or from the pills of the Medici.

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PORTIA.

[THE MERCHANT OF VENICE.]

“It is probable that all art-critics are so dazzled and captured by the astonishing character of Shylock that they fail to do justice to Portia, although Shylock is not richer artistically, nor more complete in his way, than Portia in hers. The two brilliant figures are both worthy of honour, worthy to be placed in the rich realm of enchanting poetry and admirable charming forms. By the terrible, unpitying Jew, against his mighty shadow, strongly contrasted with her brilliant light, she hangs like a magnificent Titian, breathing beauty, near a glorious Rembrandt.

“Portia has her full share of the agreeable

qualities which Shakespeare has given to many of his female characters; but with the dignity, the sweetness, and tenderness which especially characterise her sex, she possesses quite peculiar or special endowments—great intellectual power, inspired mind, decided firmness, and a sprightliness which plays over all. These are inborn, but she has still other remarkable external gifts, which result from her position and relations. Thus she is heiress to a princely name and incalculable wealth; she is always surrounded by a host of gay pleasures; from infancy she has breathed an atmosphere spiced with perfume and the fragrance of flattery. Hence a commanding but charming manner, an aristocratic elevated tenderness, a spirit of magnificence in all which she does and says, as of one familiar from birth with splendour. She wanders ever as if in marble palaces, under gold-embroidered canopies; on floors of cedar and mosaics of jasper and porphyry; in gardens with statues, flowers, and fountains, and spiritual whispering music. She is full of penetrating wisdom, truest tenderness, and lively wit. And never having known poverty, grief, fear, or adversity, her wisdom has no trace of gloom or sadness; all her actions are inspired with faith, hope, and joy, and her wit is not in the least malicious or biting.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> These are not Mrs. Jamieson's own words, but a close translation of Heine's version of them.—*Translator*.

I have taken the foregoing passages from a work by Mrs. Jamieson, entitled, "Moral, Poetical, and Historical Characters of Women."

In this work only the women of Shakespeare are discussed, and what is here cited indicate the spirit of the writer, who is probably a Scotch lady. What she says of Portia, as opposed to Shylock, is not only beautiful but true. Should we take the latter, according to the usual conception, as the representative of the stern, earnest, art-detesting representative of Judea, Portia, on the contrary, appears to us as setting forth that after-blossoming of Greek spirit which spread forth its delicious perfume in the sixteenth century from Italy all over the world, and which we love and esteem to-day as the Renaissance. Portia is also the type of gay prosperity in anti-thesis to the gloomy adversity which Shylock presents. How blooming, rose-like, pure ringing, is her every thought and saying, how glowing with joy her every word, how beautiful all the figures of her phrases, which are mostly from the mythology. And how dismal, sharp, pinching, and ugly are, on the contrary, the thoughts and utterances of Shylock, who employs only similes from the Old Testament. His wit is cramped and corroding, he seeks his metaphors amid the most repulsive subjects, and even his words are discords squeezed together, shrill, hissing, and whirring.

As the people, so their homes. When we see how the servant of Jehovah will not endure an image of either God or man in his "honourable house," and even closes its ears—the windows—lest the sounds of heathenish masquerading should pierce therein, and then see on the contrary the costly and exquisitely tasteful villegiatura-life in the beautiful palace of Belmont, where all is light and music, where among pictures, marble statues, and high laurel-trees, the elegantly clad wooers wander and discuss enigmas of love, while through and amid all this splendour fair Signora Portia gleams like a goddess whose sunny locks—

"Hang on her temples like a golden fleece."<sup>1</sup>

By such a contrast the two chief personages of the drama are so individualised that one might swear they were not the feigned fantasies of a poet, but real people and of woman born. Yes, they seem to us to be even more living than the common creatures of the world, for neither time nor death have part in them, and in their veins runs immortal blood, that of undying poetry. When thou goest to Venice and wanderest through the Doge's palace, thou knowest well that neither in the hall of the senators, nor on the Giant's Stair, wilt thou meet Marino

<sup>1</sup> *Merchant of Venice*, act i. sc. 1.



Faliero. Of the old Dandolo thou wilt indeed be reminded in the Arsenal, but on none of the golden galleys wilt thou seek the blind hero. Seest thou on one corner of the Via Santa a snake carved in stone, and on the other a winged lion, which holds the head of the serpent in his claws, you may remember the proud Carmagnolo, but only for an instant. But far more than all such historical persons wilt thou think in Venice of Shakespeare's Shylock, who is ever living while they are long mouldered in the grave.

And when thou crossest the Rialto thine eye will seek him everywhere, and thou deemest he must be there behind some pillar with his Jewish gaberdine, his mistrusting, reckoning face, and thou believest many a time that thou canst hear his harsh voice—"Three thousand ducats—well!"

I at least, a wandering hunter of dreams, looked around me on the Rialto to see if I could find Shylock. I had something to tell him which would have pleased him; which was, that his cousin Monsieur de Shylock in Paris had become the greatest baron of all Christendom, and received from their Catholic Majesties the Order of Isabella, which was originally instituted to celebrate the expulsion of Jews and Moors from Spain. But I found him not on the Rialto, so I determined to look for my old acquaintance

in the Synagogue. The Jews happened to be just then celebrating their holy Feast of Expiation, and stood wrapped up in their white *Schau-fäden-Talaren*,<sup>1</sup> with strange, mysterious noddings of their heads, looking like a company of spectres. The poor Jews who stood there fasting and praying since early in the morning had not tasted food nor drink since the yester-evening, and had also first of all begged pardon of all their acquaintances for any evil things which they might have said of them during the past year, that God might in like manner forgive them their sins—a beautiful custom, which very strangely exists among this race, which has, however, remained afar from the teachings of Christ.

But while looking round for old Shylock and passing in careful review all the pale suffering faces of the Jews, I made a discovery which I—more is the pity!—cannot suppress. I had the same day visited the madhouse of San Carlo, and now it occurred to me in the Synagogue that there glimmered in the glances of the Jews the same dreadful, half staring, half unsteady, half crafty, half stupid expression which I had previously seen in the eyes of the lunatics in San Carlo. This indescribable, perplexing look did not so much indicate absence of mind as rather the supremacy of a fixed idea. Has perhaps the

<sup>1</sup> A peculiar head-dress, worn by Jews in the synagogue.

faith in that extra-mundane thunder-god whom Moses preached, become the fixed idea of a whole race, so that, though they have for two thousand years suffered from it in strait-jackets and shower-baths, yet for all that will not give it up—like that lunatic lawyer whom I saw in San Carlo, who would not be persuaded but what the sun was an English cheese, the rays of which were long red maggots, and that one of these worm-rays was eating away his brain.

I will here by no means deny the value of that fixed idea, but I will only say that those who have it are much too weak to manage it, and therefore being oppressed by it have become incurable. What tremendous martyrdom have they suffered from it! what greater martyrdoms await them in future! I shudder at the thought, and an infinite pity ripples through my heart. During the whole Middle Ages, till to-day, the predominant view of all things was not in direct contradiction with that idea with which Moses burdened the Jews, lashed it into them with holy straps, and cut it deeply into their flesh—in fact, they did not differ materially from Christians and Mahometans, nor by an antagonistic synthesis, but only by analysis and shibboleth. But if Satan, or the sinful pantheism—from which may all the saints of the Old and New Testament as well as the Koran protect us!—should conquer, there will

fall on the heads of the poor Jews a tempest of persecution which will far surpass all their previous sufferings.

Though I looked all around in the synagogue of Venice, on every side I could nowhere see the face of Shylock. And yet it seemed to me he must be there, hidden under one of those white *talars*, praying more fervently than any of his fellow-believers, with stormy, wild passion, yes, with madness, to the throne of Jehovah, the severe, divine monarch. I saw him not. But towards evening when, according to the belief of the Jews, the gates of heaven are closed and no further prayer can enter, I heard a voice in which tears flowed as they were never wept from eyes. There was a sobbing which might have moved a stone to pity—there were utterances of agony such as could only come from a breast which held shut within itself all the martyrdom which an utterly tormented race had endured for eighteen centuries. It was the death-rattle of a soul which, weary to death, sinks to the ground before the gates of heaven. And this voice seemed to be well known to me—as if I had heard it long long ago, when it wailed just as despairingly, “Jessica, my child!”



MAIDENS AND WOMEN

IN THE

COMEDIES OF SHAKESPEARE.





## MIRANDA.

[THE TEMPEST, Act III. Scene 1.]

*Fer.* Wherefore weep you ?

*Mira.* At mine unworthiness, that dare not offer  
What I desire to give, and much less take  
What I shall die to want. But this is trifling ;  
And all the more it seeks to hide itself,  
The bigger bulk it shows. Hence, bashful cunning !  
And prompt me, plain and holy innocence !  
I am your wife, if you will marry me ;  
If not, I'll die your maid : to be your fellow  
You may deny me ; but I'll be your servant,  
Whether you will or no.

*Fer.* My mistress, dearest,  
And I thus humble ever.

*Mira.* My husband then ?

*Fer.* Ay, with a heart as willing  
As bondage e'er of freedom : here's my hand.

*Mira.* And mine, with my heart in't. And now farewell  
Till half an hour hence.

## TITANIA.

[MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM, *Act II. Scene 3.*]*Enter* TITANIA, *with her train.*

*Tita.* Come, now a roundel, and a fairy song ;  
 Then, for the third part of a minute, hence ;  
 Some to kill cankers in the musk-rose buds ;  
 Some, war with rear-mice for their leathern wings,  
 To make my small elves coats ; and some, keep back  
 The clamorous owl, that nightly hoots, and wonders  
 At our quaint spirits : Sing me now asleep ;  
 Then to your offices, and let me rest.

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## PERDITA.

[WINTER'S TALE, *Act IV. Scene 3.*]

*Per.* Come, take your flowers :  
 Methinks, I play as I have seen them do  
 In Whitsun' pastorals : sure, this robe of mine  
 Does change my disposition.

*Flo.* What you do,  
 Still betters what is done. When you speak, sweet,  
 I'd have you do it ever : when you sing,  
 I'd have you buy and sell so ; so give alms ;

Pray so ; and, for the ordering your affairs,  
 To sing them too : When you do dance, I wish you  
 A wave o' the sea, that you might ever do  
 Nothing but that ; move still, still so, and own  
 No other function : Each your doing,  
 So singular in each particular,  
 Crowns what you are doing in the present deeds,  
 That all your acts are queens.

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IMOGENE.

[CYMBELINE, Act II. Scene 2.]

*Imo.* To your protection I commend me, gods !  
 From fairies, and the tempters of the night,  
 Guard me, beseech ye !

[Sleeps. IACHIMO, from the trunk

*Iach.* The crickets sing, and man's o'erlabour'd sense  
 Repairs itself by rest. Our Tarquin thus  
 Did softly press the rushes, ere he waken'd  
 The chastity he wounded.—Cytherea,  
 How bravely thou becomest thy bed ! fresh lily !  
 And whiter than the sheets ! That I might touch !  
 But kiss ; one kiss ! Rubies unparagon'd,  
 How dearly they do 't !—'Tis her breathing that  
 Perfumes the chamber thus. The flame o' the taper  
 Bows towards her : and would under-peep her lids,  
 To see the enclosed lights, now canopied  
 Under those windows,—white and azure, laced  
 With blue of heaven's own tinct.

## JULIA.

[TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA, *Act IV. Scene 4.*]

*Jul.* How many women would do such a message ?  
 Alas, poor Proteus ! Thou hast entertain'd  
 A fox to be the shepherd of thy lambs :  
 Alas, poor fool ! why do I pity him  
 That with his very heart despiseth me ?  
 Because he loves her, he despiseth me ;  
 Because I love him, I must pity him.  
 This ring I gave him, when he parted from me,  
 To bind him to remember my good will :  
 And now am I (unhappy messenger)  
 To plead for that which I would not obtain ;  
 To carry that which I would have refused ;  
 To praise his faith which I would have dispraised.  
 I am my master's true confirmed love ;  
 But cannot be true servant to my master,  
 Unless I prove false traitor to myself.  
 Yet I will woo for him ; but yet so coldly,  
 As, Heaven it knows, I would not have him speed.

## SILVIA.

[TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA, *Act IV. Scene 4.*]

Here, youth, there is my purse ; I give thee this  
 For thy sweet mistress' sake, because thou lovest her.  
 Farewell. [*Exit Silvia.*]

*Jul.* And she shall thank you for't, if e'er you know her.  
 A virtuous gentlewoman, mild, and beautiful.  
 I hope my master's suit will be but cold,  
 Since she respects my mistress' love so much.  
 Alas, how love can trifle with itself !  
 Here is her picture : Let me see ; I think,  
 If I had such a tire, this face of mine  
 Were full as lovely as is this of hers ;  
 And yet the painter flatter'd her a little,  
 Unless I flatter with myself too much.  
 Her hair is auburn, mine is perfect yellow :  
 If that be all the difference in his love,  
 I'll get me such a colour'd periwig.  
 Her eyes as grey as glass, and so are mine :  
 Ay, but her forehead's low, and mine's as high.  
 What should it be, that he respects in her,  
 But I can make respective to myself,  
 If this fond love were not a blinded god ?

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HERO.

[MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING, *Act IV. Scene 1.*]

*Friar.* Lady, what man is he you are accused of ?

*Hero.* They know, that do accuse me ; I know none :  
 If I know more of any man alive,  
 Than that which maiden modesty doth warrant,  
 Let all my sins lack mercy !—O my father,



Prove you, that any man with me conversed  
 At hours unmeet, or that I yesternight  
 Maintain'd the change of words with any creature,  
 Refuse me, hate me, torture me to death.

---

*BEATRICE.*

[MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING, *Act III. Scene 1.*]

*Hero.* O God of love ! I know, he doth deserve  
 As much as may be yielded to a man :  
 But nature never framed a woman's heart  
 Of prouder stuff than that of Beatrice :  
 Disdain and scorn ride sparkling in her eyes,  
 Misprising what they look on ; and her wit  
 Values itself so highly, that to her  
 All matter else seems weak : she cannot love,  
 Nor take no shape nor project of affection,  
 She is so self endeared.

*Urs.* Sure, I think so ;  
 And therefore, certainly, it were not good,  
 She knew his love, lest she make sport at it.

*Hero.* Why, you speak truth : I never yet saw man,  
 How wise, how noble, young, how rarely featured,  
 But she would spell him backward : if fair-faced,  
 She'd swear, the gentleman should be her sister ;  
 If black, why nature, drawing of an antic,  
 Made a foul blot ; if tall, a lance ill-headed ;

If low, an agate very vilely cut ;  
 If speaking, why a vane blown with all winds ;  
 If silent, why, a block moved with none.  
 So turns she every man the wrong side out ;  
 And never gives to truth and virtue that  
 Which simpleness and merit purchaseth.

*Urs.* Sure, sure, such carping is not commendable.

*Hero.* No : not to be so odd, and from all fashions,  
 As Beatrice is, cannot be commendable :  
 But who dare tell her so ? If I should speak,  
 She'd mock me into air ; O, she would laugh me  
 Out of myself, press me to death with wit.  
 Therefore let Benedick, like cover'd fire,  
 Consume away in sighs, waste inwardly :  
 It were a better death than die with mocks ;  
 Which is as bad as die with tickling.

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## HELENA.

[ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL, *Act I. Scene 3.*]

*Hel.* Then, I confess,  
 Here on my knee, before high Heaven and you,  
 That before you, and next unto high Heaven,  
 I love your son ;—  
 My friends were poor, but honest ; so's my love :  
 Be not offended ; for it hurts not him,

That he is loved of me : I follow him not  
 By any token of presumptuous suit ;  
 Nor would I have him, till I do deserve him ;  
 Nor yet know how that desert should be.  
 I know I love in vain, strive against hope ;  
 Yet, in this captious and intenible sieve,  
 I still pour in the waters of my love,  
 And lack not to lose still : thus, Indian-like,  
 Religious in mine error, I adore  
 The sun that looks upon his worshipper,  
 But knows of him no more. My dearest madam,  
 Let not your hate encounter with my love,  
 For loving where you do : but, if yourself,  
 Whose aged honour cites a virtuous youth,  
 Did ever, in so true a flame of liking,  
 Wish chastely, and love dearly, that your Dian  
 Was both herself and love, O then give pity  
 To her, whose state is such, that cannot choose  
 But lend and give, where she is sure to lose ;  
 That seeks not to find that her search implies,  
 But, riddle-like, lives sweetly where she dies.

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CELIA.

[AS YOU LIKE IT, *Act I. Scene 2.*]

*Ros.* From henceforth, I will, coz, and devise sports :  
 let me see,—What think you of falling in love ?

*Cel.* Marry, I prythee, do, to make sport withal : but

love no man in good earnest; nor no farther in sport neither, than with safety of a pure blush thou may'st in honour come off again.

*Ros.* What shall be our sport then?

*Cel.* Let us sit and mock the good housewife, Fortune, from her wheel, that her gifts may henceforth be bestowed equally.

*Ros.* I would we could do so: for her benefits are mightily misplaced: and the bountiful blind woman doth most mistake in her gifts to women.

*Cel.* 'Tis true: for those that she makes fair, she scarce makes honest; and those that she makes honest, she makes very ill-favour'dly.

*Ros.* Nay, now thou goest from fortune's office to nature's: fortune reigns in gifts of the world, not in the lineaments of nature.

## ROSALIND.

[AS YOU LIKE IT, Act III. Scene 2.]

*Cel.* Didst thou hear these verses?

*Ros.* O yes, I heard them all, and more too; for some of them had in them more feet than the verses would bear.

*Cel.* That's no matter; the feet might bear the verses.

*Ros.* Ay, but the feet were lame, and could not bear themselves without the verse, and therefore stood lamely in the verse.

*Cel.* But didst thou hear, without wondering how thy name should be hang'd and carved upon these trees?

*Ros.* I was seven of the nine days out of the wonder before you came ; for look here what I found on a palm-tree : I was never so be-rhymed since Pythagoras' time, that I was an Irish rat, which I can hardly remember.

---

OLIVIA.

[TWELFTH NIGHT ; OR, WHAT YOU WILL,  
*Act I. Scene 5.*]

*Vio.* Good madam, let me see your face.

*Oli.* Have you any commission from your lord to negotiate with my face ? you are now out of your text : but we will draw the curtain, and show you the picture. Look you, sir, such a one as I was this present. Is 't not well done ? [*Unveiling.*

*Vio.* Excellently done, if God did all.

*Oli.* 'Tis in grain, sir ; 'twill endure wind and weather.

*Vio.* 'Tis beauty truly blent, whose red and white  
Nature's own sweet and cunning hand laid on :  
Lady, you are the cruel'st she alive,  
If you will lead these graces to the grave,  
And leave the world no copy.

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## VIOLA.

[TWELFTH NIGHT; OR, WHAT YOU WILL,  
*Act II. Scene 4.*]

*Vio.* Too well what love women to men may owe;  
In faith, they are as true of heart as we.  
My father had a daughter loved a man,  
As it might be, perhaps, were I a woman,  
I should your lordship.

*Duke.* And what's her history?

*Vio.* A blank, my lord. She never told her love,  
But let concealment, like a worm i' the bud,  
Feed on her damask cheek: she pined in thought;  
And, with a green and yellow melancholy,  
She sat like Patience on a monument,  
Smiling at grief. Was not this love, indeed?  
We men may say more, swear more: but, indeed,  
Our shows are more than will; for still we prove  
Much in our vows, but little in our love.

*Duke.* But died thy sister of her love, my boy?

*Vio.* I am all the daughters of my father's house,  
and all the brothers too.

## MARIA.

[TWELFTH NIGHT; OR, WHAT YOU WILL,  
*Act I. Scene 3.*]

*Sir And.* An' you part so, mistress, I would I might  
never draw sword again. Fair lady, do you think you  
have fools in hand?



*Mar.* Sir, I have not you by the hand.

*Sir And.* Marry, but you shall have; and here's my hand.

*Mar.* Now, sir, thought is free. I pray you, bring your hand to the buttery-bar, and let it drink.

*Sir And.* Wherefore, sweetheart? What's your metaphor?

*Mar.* It's dry, sir.

*Sir And.* Why, I think so: I am not such an ass, but I can keep my hand dry. But what's your jest?

*Mar.* A dry jest, sir.

*Sir And.* Are you full of them?

*Mar.* Ay, sir: I have them at my fingers' ends: marry, now I let go your hand, I am barren.

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## ISABELLA.

[MEASURE FOR MEASURE, *Act II. Scene 4*]

*Ang.* Admit no other way to save his life,  
 (As I subscribe not that, nor any other,  
 But in the loss of question,) that you, his sister,  
 Finding yourself desired of such a person,  
 Whose credit with the judge, or own great place,  
 Could fetch your brother from the manacles  
 Of the all-binding law; and that there were  
 No earthly mean to save him, but that either  
 You must lay down the treasures of your body

To this supposed, or else let him suffer :

What would you ?

*Isab.* As much for my poor brother, as myself.  
That is, were I under the terms of death,  
The impression of keen whips I'd wear as rubies,  
And strip myself to death, as to a bed  
That longing I have been sick for, ere I'd yield  
My body up to shame.

*Ang.* Then must your brother die.

*Isab.* And 'twere the cheaper way :  
Better it were, a brother died at once,  
Than that a sister, by redeeming him,  
Should die for ever.

## THE PRINCESS OF FRANCE.

[LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST, Act IV. Scene 1.]

*Cost.* God dig-you-den all ! Pray you which is the head lady ?

*Prin.* Thou shalt know her, fellow, by the rest that have no heads.

*Cost.* Which is the greatest lady, the highest ?

*Prin.* The thickest and the-tallest.

*Cost.* The thickest, and the tallest ! it is so ; truth is truth.

An your waist, mistress, were as slender as my wit,  
One of these maids' girdles for your waist should be fit.  
Are not you the chief woman ? you are the thickest here.

## THE ABBESS.

[COMEDY OF ERRORS, *Act V. Scene 1.*]

*Adr.* It was the copy of our conference :  
 In bed, he slept not for my urging it ;  
 At board, he fed not for my urging it ;  
 Alone, it was the subject of my theme ;  
 In company, I often glanced it ;  
 Still did I tell him it was vile and bad.

*Abb.* And thereof came it, that thy man was mad :  
 The venom clamours of a jealous woman  
 Poison more deadly than a mad dog's tooth.  
 It seems, his sleep was hinder'd by thy railing :  
 And therefore comes it, that his head is light.  
 Thou say'st, his meat was sauced by thy upbraidings :  
 Unquiet meals make ill digestions,  
 Thereof the raging fire of fever bred ;  
 And what's a fever but a fit of madness ?  
 Thou say'st his sports were hinder'd by thy brawls :  
 Sweet recreation barr'd, what doth ensue,  
 But moody and dull melancholy,  
 (Kinsman to grim and comfortless despair ;)  
 And, at her heels, a huge infectious troop  
 Of pale distemperatures, and foes to life ?  
 In food, in sport, and life-preserving rest  
 To be disturb'd, would mad or man, or beast ;  
 The consequence is then, thy jealous fits  
 Have scared thy husband from the use of wits.

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## MRS. PAGE.

[MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR, *Act II. Scene 2.*]

*Quick.* That were a jest, indeed ; they have not so little grace, I hope :—that were a trick, indeed ! But Mrs. Page would desire you to send her your little page, of all loves ; her husband has a marvellous infection to the little page : and, truly, Master Page is an honest man. Never a wife in Windsor leads a better life than she does ; do what she will, say what she will, take all, pay all, go to bed when she list, rise when she list, all is as she will ; and, truly, she deserves it : for if there be a kind woman in Windsor she is one. You must send her your page : no remedy.

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## MRS. FORD.

[MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR, *Act I. Scene 3.*]

*Fal.* No quips now, Pistol : Indeed I am in the waist two yards about : but I am now about no waste ; I am about thrift. Briefly, I do mean to make love to Ford's wife ; I spy entertainment in her ; she discourses, she carves, she gives the leer of invitation : I can construe the action of her familiar style ; and the hardest voice of her behaviour, to be English'd rightly, is, *I am Sir John Falstaff's.*

*Pist.* He hath studied her well, and translated her well—out of honesty into English.

## ANNE PAGE.

[MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR, *Act I. Scene 1.*]*Anne.* Will't please your worship to come in, sir.*Slen.* No, I thank you, forsooth, heartily; I am very well.*Anne.* The dinner attends you, sir.*Slen.* I am not a-hungry, I thank you, forsooth.—Go, sirrah, for all you are my man, go, wait upon my cousin Shallow: [*Exit Simple.*] A justice of peace sometime may be beholden to his friend for a man.—I keep but three men and a boy yet, till my mother be dead: But what though? yet I live like a poor gentleman born.*Anne.* I may not go in without your worship: they will not sit till you come.

## KATHARINA.

[TAMING OF THE SHREW, *Act II. Scene 1.*]*Pet.* I pray you do, I will attend her here,—  
And woo her with some spirit when she comes.  
Say, that she rail,—why, then I'll tell her plain,  
She sings as sweetly as a nightingale;  
Say, that she frown,—I'll say, she looks as clear  
As morning roses newly wash'd with dew;  
Say, she be mute, and will not speak a word,—  
Then, I'll commend her volubility,

And say—she uttereth piercing eloquence ;  
 If she do bid me pack, I'll give her thanks,  
 As though she bid me stay by her a week ;  
 If she deny to wed, I'll crave the day  
 When I shall ask the banns, and when be married.—  
 But here she comes ; and now, Petruccio, speak.

*Enter KATHARINA.*

Good-morrow, Kate ; for that's your name, I hear.

*Kath.* Well have you heard, but something hard of hearing ;

They call me Katharine that do talk of me.

*Pet.* You lie, in faith ; for you are call'd plain Kate,  
 And bonny Kate, and sometimes Kate the curst ;  
 But Kate, the prettiest Kate in Christendom,  
 Kate of Kate-Hall, my supper-dainty Kate,  
 For dainties are all cates : and therefore, Kate,  
 Take this of me, Kate of my consolation,—  
 Hearing thy mildness praised in every town,  
 Thy virtues spoke of, and thy beauty sounded,  
 (Yet not so deeply as to thee belongs,)  
 Myself am moved to woo thee for my wife.

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In the introductory pages to this picture-gallery I have related how the popularity of Shakespeare spread over England and Germany, and how, here and there, appreciation of his works was developed. Unfortunately I could impart no such pleasant information as regards the Latin lands. In Spain, the name of our poet has remained even to this day unknown. Italy ignores him—probably intentionally, in order to protect



the fame of its own great poet from transalpine rivalry; and France, the home of traditional taste and refined tone, long believed it had sufficiently honoured the great Briton when it called him a genial barbarian, and made as little mockery as might be of his strange roughness. Meantime the political revolution which animated this country also developed a literary one, which, as regards Terrorism, perhaps surpasses the first; and when it came, Shakespeare was lifted on the shield. Of course, just as in their attempts at political changes, the French are seldom quite honourable in their literary revolutions—in the one as in the other they praise and exalt a hero, not for his true innate worth, but on account of the momentary advantage which their cause may gain by such exalting and glorifying, and so it happens that they to-day praise what they to-morrow cast down, or the contrary. For ten years Shakespeare has been for the party of the present literary revolution a subject of the blindest adoration. But whether he has had among these men of the Movement a truly scientific recognition, or even a proper comprehension, is the great question. The French are too truly the children of their mother, they have taken in social falsehoods with their mothers' milk too much to absolutely give their taste or even full intelligence to the poet who breathes the truth of nature in every word.

It is certainly true that for some time there has prevailed among their writers an unbounded striving towards such naturalness; they have even torn the garments of conventionalism from their limbs, and show themselves in hideous nakedness. Yet ever some rag of fashion which clings to them betrays the old unnaturalness, and awakens in the German looker on an ironic smile. These writers put me in mind of the copperplate engravings in certain novels where the indecent amours of the eighteenth century are imitated, and where, in spite of the Eden costume of nature of gentlemen and ladies, the former keep their queued periwigs, and the latter their towering *frisées* head-dresses.

It is not by direct criticism, but indirectly in dramatic compositions which are more or less imitations of Shakespeare, that the French attain to some knowledge of the great poet. As a mediator in this manner Victor Hugo deserves great praise, not that I regard him, however, as a mere imitator of the Briton. Victor Hugo is a genius of the highest order, and his powers of flight and of creation are wonderful; he has the form and the word, he is the greatest poet of France, but his Pegasus has a morbid fear of the roaring torrents of the present, and goes most unwillingly to water where the light of day is mirrored in fresh floods—he loves far better to

seek among the ruins of the past those forgotten springs where of old the majestic winged horse of Shakespeare once quenched his immortal thirst. Whether it is that those ancient springs, half ruined and half bogged, no longer supply pure draughts, it is enough to say that Victor Hugo's dramatic poems contain more of the turbid mud than of the reviving spirit of the old English Hippocrene—there is wanting in them its joyous brightness and harmonious health; and I must confess I am often seized with the dreadful thought that this Victor Hugo is the ghost of some English poet of the golden age of Elizabeth, a dead poet who has risen from his grave in an ill-temper to write some posthumous works in a time and country where he will be safe from competition with the great William.<sup>1</sup> In truth, Victor Hugo reminds me of such people as Marlow, Decker, or Heywood, who in language and manner were so much like their great contemporary, and only lacked his deep perception and sense of beauty, his terrible and laughing grace, his revealing mission from nature. And, ah! to all the shortcomings of Marlow, Decker, and Heywood there is in Victor Hugo the saddest want of all—that of

<sup>1</sup> Can it be that the well-known French expression "*le grand Williams*," attributed to Janin, originated in some recollection of Heine's German phrase, "*der Konkurrenz des grossen Williams*"? The genitive may possibly have been taken for a nominative.—*Translator*.

life. They suffered from an over-boiling copiousness, the wildest fulness of blood, and their poetic creation was written breath, shouting for joy or sobbing with woe; but Victor Hugo, with all the honour which I grant him, I must confess has something dead, uncanny, ghostly, grave-risen, vampire-like in him. He does not awaken inspiration in our hearts—he sucks it out; he does not win our feeling by poetic transfiguration, but terrifies it by repulsive grotesques. He suffers from death and horrors.

A young lady with whom I am very intimate expressed herself recently as to this craving for horrors by Hugo's muse in very apt words. She said, "The muse of Victor Hugo reminds me of the eccentric princess who was determined to marry only the ugliest man alive, and so sent forth through the land a summons that all young men who were remarkably misshapen should on a certain day repair to the royal castle as candidates for marriage. As may be supposed there was a fine collection of cripples and grotesques, and one might have supposed that he had before him all the caricatures—I mean characters—of one of Hugo's novels. But Quasimodo bore the bell and took the bride home."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Aber Quasimodo, führte die Braut nach Hause.* A neat adaptation of the old proverb: *Wer's gluck hat, der führet die Braut heim, und wer's Recht hat, der schläft bei ihr.* Also English.—*Translator.*

Next to Victor Hugo I must mention Dumas; and he also has to a certain degree promoted an appreciation of Shakespeare in France. If the former by extravagance in ugliness accustomed the French to seek in the drama not merely a beautiful garb for passion, Dumas so influenced them that they took great pleasure in the natural expression of it. But this passion passed with him for the highest ideal, and in his poems it took the place of poetry. The natural result was that he had all the more effect on the stage. He familiarised the public in this sphere, and in the representation of passions, with the boldest conceptions of Shakespeare, and he who had once found pleasure in *Henry III.* and Richard Darlington, could no longer complain of want of taste in *Othello* and *Richard III.* The accusation of plagiarism which was urged against him was as foolish as it was unjust. It cannot be denied that Dumas has here and there in his passionate scenes taken something from Shakespeare, but our Schiller had done this more boldly without incurring the least reproach. And as for Shakespeare himself—how much was he indebted to his predecessors! Yes, and it happened even to *him* that a sour-souled pamphleteer once assailed him with the charge that “the best of his dramas were taken from earlier writers.” Shakespeare,



according to this amusing incident, appears as a jackdaw dressed out in peacock's feathers. The Swan of Avon was silent, and probably thought in his divine mind—"I am neither daw nor peacock!" and rocked himself carelessly in the blue waves of poetry, oft smiling at the stars, those golden thoughts of heaven.

Count Alfred de Vigny must also be mentioned here. This writer, quite familiar with the English idiom, studied Shakespeare most thoroughly, translated with great cleverness several of his dramas, and this study exercised a most favourable influence on his own works. Owing to the ready ear and keen perception of art, which it must be admitted de Vigny possessed, we may assume that he heard and saw more deeply into the spirit of Shakespeare than most of his compatriots. But the talent of this man, like all his manner of thought and feeling, is in the dainty, delicate, and miniature-like, and his works are chiefly valuable for their elaborate finish. Therefore I can well imagine that he often stood stupefied before those stupendous beauties which Shakespeare had hewed, as it were, from the most tremendous granite blocks of poetry. . . . He certainly gazed at them with anxious admiration, like a goldsmith who in Florence stares at the colossal gates of the Baptistery which, though made at one cast of bronze, are



still as delicate and dainty as if cut by hand, and which look like the finest jewellery.<sup>1</sup>

If it be hard enough for the French to understand Shakespeare's tragedies, it must be admitted that an appreciation of his comedies is almost utterly denied to them. The poetry of passion is to them intelligible, and they can also to a certain extent comprehend the truth of the characteristic, for their hearts have learned to glow, the impassioned is their own peculiar line,<sup>2</sup> and with their analytical intelligence they can separate every given character into its minutest elements, and calculate the phases or situations into which that character would fall when reduced to the realities of life. But in the magic garden of the Shakespearean comedy all this empirical knowledge is of no avail. At its very gate their understanding fails them, their heart knows nothing definite, and they lack the mysterious divining rod at the touch of which the lock opens. There they stare with amazed eyes through the golden grate, and see how lords and ladies, shepherds and shepherdesses, fools and sages, wander about under the tall trees; how the lover and his loved one rest in the cool shadows and exchange tender

<sup>1</sup> "Jewellery in iron" has also been very happily applied to the great lanterns of the Strozzi Palace in Florence. There is something of this grand elaborateness in Cellini's "Perseus."—*Translator*.

<sup>2</sup> *Das passionirte ist so recht ihr Fach.*

words; how now and then a fabulous animal, perhaps a stag with silver horns, comes by, or else a chaste unicorn, leaping from the thicket, lays his head in the lovely lady's lap. And they see how the water-ladies rise with green hair and glittering veils, and how all at once the moon rises, and they hear how the nightingale trills—and they shake their wise heads at all the incomprehensibly nonsensical stuff! Yes, the French can comprehend the sun but not the moon, and least of all the rapturous sobbing and melancholy ecstasy of the nightingales.

Yes, neither their empirical familiarity with human passions, nor their positive knowledge of the world, is of any avail to the French, when they would unriddle the visions and sounds which gleam and ring forth from the magic gardens of Shakespearean comedy; they often think they see a human face, yet when near by it is a landscape fair—what they believed were eyebrows was a hazel-bush, and the nose was a rock, and the mouth a little fountain, as we see them in changing puzzle-pictures. And, on the other hand, what the poor Frenchmen mistake for a strangely gnarled old tree, or marvellous stone, appears on closer view to be a real human face of tremendous expression. And if they succeed in overhearing with strained ears some dialogue which two lovers are holding in the

forest-shade, they are still more bewildered, for they hear familiar words in changed sense, and so they swear that these people know nothing of flaming feeling, and the great passion. What they had ordered for refreshment was witty water-ice, not a blazing bowl of love-drink. Nor do they observe that these people are only disguised doves, who converse in a jargon of their own,<sup>1</sup> which one can only learn in dreams or in earliest infancy. But it is worst of all for the French standing outside the grated gate of Shakespearean comedy, when ever and anon a pleasant west wind sweeps over a garden-bed and wafts to their noses most unknown perfume—"What's that?"

Justice demands that I here mention a French writer who, with a cleverness quite his own, imitated Shakespearean comedies, and manifested even in the choice of his models a strange susceptibility to true poetry. This is Alfred de Musset. He wrote, about five years ago, several small dramas which, so far as construction and style are concerned, are altogether after the comedies of Shakespeare. And he has with French facility mastered the caprice, not the humour, of his original. And what is more,

<sup>1</sup> *Koteriesprache*, the peculiar language of a set. "Society slang," and, as Heine here suggests, nursery-talk. Jargoning is specially applied to the language of birds by old English poets. *Liebestrunke* or *Liebestrank*, "love-drink," also means a philtre to cause love.—*Translator*.

there is not wanting in these pretty trifles some of the pure gold of poetry, though it be drawn into the thinnest wire. It was only to be regretted that the then youthful composer had read, in addition to a French translation of the works of Shakespeare, also a version of Byron's poems, and was thereby led into affecting in the costume of the spleeny lord that satiety and weariness of life which it was the fashion of French youth to assume. The rosiest little boys, the healthiest saucy striplings,<sup>1</sup> declared in those days that their sense of enjoyment was quite blunted; they feigned the coldness of old age, and affected a distrait and yawning expression.

Since which time our poor Monsieur de Musset has seen the error of his ways and returned from them, and now plays no more the part of Used-up in his poems; but, alack, those poems now contain, instead of simulated ruin, the far more inconsolable traces of a real decline of bodily and mental power. Ah, this writer reminds me of those artificial ruins which we see in castlegardens of the eighteenth century, which were

<sup>1</sup> *Gelbschnabel*, a yellow bill, so called from certain birds whose bills are yellow while very young. A greenhorn, a freshman, an innocent, an unsophisticated gosling, or, in some parts of America, a *loppus*. The Byronism which Heine here ridicules has had its parallel of late years in the pessimism of certain popular philosophers, which unfortunately lacks its Byron.—*Translator*.

once weak inventions of a childish fancy, but which in the course of time awaken in us a mournful pity, when they have become weather-beaten and mouldering in earnest, and run into real decay.

The French are, as I have said, little inclined to grasp the spirit of the Shakespearean comedy, and I have found, with one exception only, none among their critics who has even a vague idea of it. Who is this man? Who is the exception. Gutzkow says that the elephant is the *doctrinaire* among animals. And just such a reasonable and perfect paragon of a ponderous elephant has most sagaciously grasped the real being of the Shakespeare comedy. Yes, one can hardly believe it, but it is Monsieur Guizot who has best written on those graceful and most mischievously wanton airy images of the modern muse, and hereupon I translate for the amazement and edification of the reader a passage from a work which was published in 1822 by Ladvocat in Paris, and which is called *De Shakespeare et de la Poésie dramatique, par F. Guizot*:—

“The Shakespearean comedies resemble neither those of Molière, nor of Aristophanes, nor of the Romans. Among the Greeks, and in modern times among the French, comedy was the result of a free but careful study of the real world of life, and the problem, or result, was its represen-



tation on the stage. The distinctions between comedy and tragedy are to be found in the beginning of dramatic art, and as they were developed the division became more marked. The reason for this lies in the things themselves. The destiny of man, like his nature, his passions and pursuits, character and occurrences, all in and around us, have serious as well as comic sides, and may be ranged as one or the other, according to our special point of view. This double-sidedness of man and the world has pointed out to dramatic poetry—naturally enough—two very different paths, but while men chose this or that as a place for rivalry or action, art never deviated from the study and representation of reality. Though Aristophanes lashes with unrestrained freedom of fancy the vices and follies of the Athenians, though Molière censures and cuts the errors or abuses of scepticism, avarice, envy, pedantry, courtly etiquette, and of virtue itself—all there is in it is that the two poets handle very different subjects, one bringing on the stage a whole life and people, the other on the contrary the incidents of private life, or the inner life of families, and what is laughable in individuals—this difference in comic material being a result of a difference in time, place, and civilisation. But to Aristophanes, as to Molière, reality or the real world is always the



stage of their representations. What inspire and sustain their poetic mood are the customs and ideas of their age, the vices and follies of their fellow-citizens—above all, nature and the life of man. Comedy therefore springs from the world which surrounds the poet, and she adapts herself far more closely than tragedy to the external action of reality.

“Not so with Shakespeare. In his time, in England, the material of the drama, Nature and human action, had not yet received from the hands of Art that distinction and classification. When the poet pleased to work this material up for the stage, he took it as a whole with all which was mixed with it, with all the contrasts which were gathered round, and public taste found no fault with such proceeding. The comic, an element of human reality, could manifest itself wherever truth required or would tolerate it, and it was quite in accordance with the character of that English civilisation that even tragedy, with which the comic was to a certain degree associated, lost in nothing the dignity of truth. In such conditions of the stage, and such tastes in the public, what kind of comedy would be likely to manifest itself? How could the latter be considered as a special kind, and bear its settled name as ‘Comedy’? It succeeded in doing this by freeing itself from those

realities or conditions in which the limits of its natural realm were neither defended nor defined. This comedy did not confine itself to the representation of accurately described manners and exact characters, it sought no more to depict men and things in a manner laughable yet true to life, it became a fantastic and romantic spirit-work,<sup>1</sup> a refuge for all delightful improbabilities, which Fantasy, from idleness or inertness, freak or fancy, strings on the thinnest of threads, so as to form all kinds of varied combinations which delight and interest us, without being consistent with the judgment of reason. Pleasant pictures, surprises, jovial intrigues, excited curiosity, disappointed hopes, changes, witty problems, which lead to disguises. Such was the material of those innocent, easily combined plays. The fabric of the Spanish pieces, which the English people began to like, gave these plays all kinds of varied frames and patterns, which applied well to those chronicles and ballads from those French and Italian novels which, next to romances of chivalry, were the favourite reading of the public. It is intelligible how this rich mine and this easy style soon attracted the attention of Shakespeare. No

<sup>1</sup> *Geisteswerk*, or work of genius. The very Hibernian mixture of similes in this sentence is neither the fault of the translator, much less of Heine, but of Guizot himself. A spirit-work refuge for improbabilities, strung like beads, could only occur to the sublime genius of an academician.—*Translator*.

one need wonder that his youthful and brilliant imagination gladly cradled itself in those materials where, freed from the strong yoke of reason, it could produce every variety of serious or startling effects in defiance of probability. This poet, whose spirit and hand moved with equal restlessness, whose manuscripts had hardly a trace of correction or improvement, must certainly have abandoned himself with special delight to that unbridled and adventuresome play of the imagination in which he could develop without restraint all his varied powers. He could cast with a free hand all things into his comedies, and indeed he did pour in everything except what was utterly intolerable in such a system—that is, that logical connection which subordinates every part of the piece to the main object, and sets forth in every detail the depth, extent, and unity of the work. In the tragedies of Shakespeare we seldom find a conception, a situation, an act of passion, a degree of crime or of virtue, which one cannot also find in one of his comedies; but what there expands itself in the abysmal depth, what manifests itself abundantly in overwhelming results, what weaves itself powerfully into a series of causes and effects, *that* is here hardly intimated—it is only cast in for an instant, to produce a fleeting effect, to lose itself as quickly in a new combination.”

In truth the Elephant is in the right: the soul

of the Shakespearean comedy is in the gaily-varied butterfly humour in which it flits from flower to flower, seldom touching the ground of reality. Only in opposition to the realistic comedy of the ancients, and of the French, can anything definite be declared of the Shakespearean comedy.

Last night I meditated long as to whether I could not give some positive explanation or clearing up of this infinite, illimitable kind of the comedy of Shakespeare. Thereupon, after long thinking here and there, I fell asleep and dreamed:—

Dreamed that it was a starry night, and I swam in a small boat on a wide, wide sea, where all kind of barks filled with masks, musicians, and torches gleaming, music sounding, many near or afar, rowed on. There were costumes of all countries and ages, old Greek tunics, mediæval knightly cloaks, Oriental turbans, shepherd's hats with fluttering ribbons, masks of beasts wild or tame—now and then I thought I saw a well-known face, sometimes I heard familiar greetings—but all passed quickly by and far away, and the merry music grew softer and fainter, when instead of the gay fiddling I heard near me the mysterious, melancholy tones of hunters' horns from another boat. Sometimes the night-wind bore the strains of both to my ear, and then the mingled melody made a happy harmony. The

water echoed ineffably sweet sounds and burned as with a magical reflection of the torches, and the gaily-pennoned pleasure-boats with their wondrous masquerades swam in light and music. A lovely lady, who stood by the rudder of one of the barks, cried to me in passing, "Is it not true, friend—thou would'st have a definition of the Shakespearean comedy?" I know not whether I answered "Yes," but in that instant the beautiful woman dipped her hand in the water and sprinkled the ringing sparks in my face, so that there was a general laughter, and I awoke.

Who was that charming woman who in such wise made merry with me in my dream? On her ideally beautiful head was a horned cap<sup>1</sup> of variegated colours with bells, a white satin garment with fluttering ribbons enclosed her almost too slender limbs, and on her breast she bore

<sup>1</sup> In allusion to the *hennin*, or the two-horned cap, often worn by ladies during the Middle Ages, but which was characteristic of witches, and termed "the triumphal *barret* of the devil" (vide *La Sorcière de G. Michelet*, vol. i. chap. v.). By the thistle, Heine refers to what is thus expressed by Friedrich (*Symbolik d. Natur*), "It is an emblem of sarcastic, biting wit," and is associated with the mottoes *Non nisi aculeos* (nothing if not stinging) and *Nemo me impune lacessit* (*Acsthetik der Pflanzenwelt*, p. 241). It is also an emblem of Venus, of beauty, and in elfin lore signifies the presence of a fairy. Heine has here with exquisite ingenuity and grace employed the symbols of witchcraft, piquancy and beauty, as attributes of his imagined goddess.—*Translator*.



a red, blooming thistle. Perhaps it was the Goddess of Caprice, that strange muse who was present at the birth of Rosalind, Beatrice, Titania, Viola, and all the rest, however they may be called, of the dear charming children of the Shakespearean comedy, and kissed their brows. She, indeed, kissed all the freaks and fancies, dainty dreams and droll devices into their young heads, whence they passed to their hearts. As among the men so with the women in Shakespeare's comedies, passion is entirely devoid of that terrible earnestness, quite without the fatalistic necessity with which it reveals itself in the tragedies. Cupid, indeed, is there blind, and carries a quiver with arrows. But these arrows are far more gaily-feathered than deadly-tipped, and the little god often squints roguishly at us over his blind. Even the flames give far more light than heat, but they are always true flames, and in the tragedies of Shakespeare, as well as in his comedies, love always bears the character of truth. Yes, truth is the token of Shakespearean love, no matter what the form may be in which it appears, be it called Miranda, or Juliet, or Cleopatra.

While I mention these names rather by accident than with intention, it occurs to me that they really represent the three most deeply significant types of love. Miranda is the representative of a love which, without previous influences of any



kind, could only develop its highest ideality as the flower of an unpolluted soil which only the feet of spirits had trodden. Ariel's melodies have trained her heart, and sensuality has never been known to her, save in the horribly hideous form of a Caliban. The love which Ferdinand awakes in her is therefore not really naïve but of a happy true-heartedness, of an early-world-like, almost terrible purity. Juliet's love shows like her age and all around her, a more romantic-mediæval character, and one blooming into the Renaissance: it glitters in colours like the court of the Scaligeri, and yet is strong as of those noble races of Lombardy which were rejuvenated with German blood and loved as strongly as they hated. Juliet represents the love of a youthful, rather rough, but of an unspoiled and fresh era. She is entirely inspired with the sensuous glow and strength of belief of such a time, and even the cold decay of the burial vault can neither shake her faith nor cool her flame. Our Cleopatra!—ah, she sets forth the love of a sickly civilisation—an age whose beauty is faded, whose locks are curled with the utmost art, anointed with all pleasant perfumes, but in which many a grey hair may be seen, a time which will empty the cup held out to it all the more hastily because it is full of dregs. This love is without faith or truth, but for all that none the less wild or glowing. In the vexed consciousness that this heat is not to be

subdued the impatient woman pours still more oil into it, and casts herself like a Bacchante into the blazing flame. She is cowardly, and yet inspired with desire for her own destruction. Love is always a kind of madness, more or less beautiful; but in this Egyptian queen it rises to the most horrible lunacy. Such love is a raging comet, which with its flaming train darts into unheard-of orbits through heaven, terrifies all the stars, even if it does not injure them, and at last, miserably crackling together, is scattered like a rocket into a thousand pieces.

Yes, thou wert like a terrible comet, beautiful Cleopatra, and thou didst glow not only unto thine own ruin, but wert ominous of evil for those of thy time! With Antony the old heroic Roman spirit came to a wretched end.

But wherewith shall I compare you, O Juliet and Miranda? I look again to heaven, seeking for a simile. It may be behind the stars where my glance cannot pierce. Perhaps if the glowing sun had the mildness of the moon I could compare it to thee, O Juliet! And were the gentle moon gifted with the glow of the sun, I would say it was like thee, Miranda!

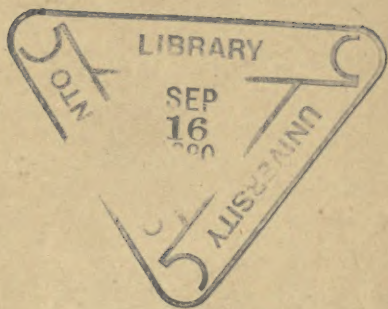




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The works of Heinrich Heine

